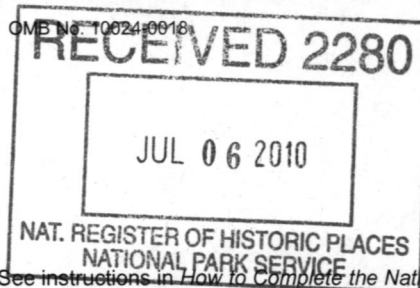


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer to complete all items.



1. Name of Property

historic name Hotel Lafayette

other names/site number Lafayette Hotel

2. Location

street & number 391 Washington Street [] not for publication

city or town Buffalo [] vicinity

state New York code NY county Erie code 29 zip code 14203

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this [X] nomination [] request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements as set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property [X] meets [] does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant [X] nationally [] statewide [] locally. ([] see continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Ruth A. Paupton DSHPO
Signature of certifying official/Title

6/25/10
Date

New York State Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property [] meets [] does not meet the National Register criteria. ([] see continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- [X] entered in the National Register
[] see continuation sheet
[] determined eligible for the National Register
[] see continuation sheet
[] determined not eligible for the National Register

[] removed from the National Register

[] other (explain) _____

Signature of the Keeper

date of action

8/19/10

Hotel Lafayette
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5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(check as many boxes as apply)

- ☒ private
☐ public-local
☐ public-State
☐ public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- ☒ building(s)
☐ district
☐ site
☐ structure
☐ object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	buildings
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	sites
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	structures
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	TOTAL

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/ Hotel

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/ Hotel

WORK IN PROGRESS

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19th & 20th CENTRY REVIVALS/

French Renaissance

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stone

walls Brick w/ Terra Cotta Trim

roof Asphalt

other

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets)

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Hotel Lafayette
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Hotel Lafayette:

Overview-

The Hotel Lafayette is a seven-story steel frame and concrete building designed in the French Renaissance style and composed of several rectangular building units completed between 1902 and 1926. There are seven bays on Washington Street and seventeen bays on Clinton Street. The exterior walls are clad in dark red brick. Decorative trim around windows, doors, and other openings is made of white glazed terra cotta. The ground floor is treated as a basement level and is clad in white terra cotta cast to look like ashlar stone blocks and voussoirs. The roofs over all of the building units are flat and invisible from the street behind a white terra cotta Classical style cornice. Principal entrances to the hotel are located on the north side (Clinton Street elevation) and on the west side (Washington Street elevation). A smaller entrance leading to an unused commercial space is located in the beveled northwest angle of the building (at the corner of Clinton and Washington Streets). The rear or basement of the building (east elevation) fronts Ellicott Street. The buildings southern façade is composed of interior courts and is unadorned. Very few alterations have been made to the exterior since the building's construction. A 1953 television antenna on the Hotel's roof does not contributing nominated resource.

The interior of the hotel reflects both the French Renaissance style with elaborate plaster work on ceilings and walls. The main lobby (remodeled in 1942) is an example of the Art Moderne style. The property is in good condition and functions as a social services hotel, although large portions of the building are now empty.

Setting:

Lafayette Square-

The hotel is situated at the intersection of Clinton and Washington Streets at the southeast corner of Lafayette Square, one of two major squares in downtown Buffalo. In the center of the tree-shaded square stands George Keller's columned Solders and Sailors Monument (1882). Structures on the north and south side of the square are multistoried office buildings with ground floor commercial space. On the south side of the square stands the Brisbane Building (1895). Directly south of the Brisbane Building and the Hotel Lafayette, on both sides of Washington Street, is the AM&A's Historic District (NR, 2008). On the north side of the square stand the Art Deco Rand Building (1929) and the International Style Lafayette Square Building (1958). On the east side of the square, across Clinton Street from the hotel, is the modern style Central Branch of the Buffalo and Erie County Public Library (1963). The west side of the square is bordered by Main Street, which in this area of downtown is a pedestrian mall (created in the 1980s) along which runs the city's only light rail rapid transit system.

Exterior:

The Hotel Lafayette is a seven-story building designed in the French renaissance style with richly decorated facades on Washington, Clinton and Ellicott Streets made of vitreous red brick and semi-glazed white terra cotta (Fig. 1). The principal building was constructed between 1902 and 1911 by the architectural firm of Bethune,

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Bethune, & Fuchs of Buffalo, with two smaller, sympathetically designed additions by the Buffalo firm of Esenwein & Johnson in 1916-17 and 1924-26. (Note: The second story is considered the first floor because it is the lowest floor with guest rooms; the floor with public spaces is referred to as the main floor. For clarity, the exterior description refers to the ground floor as the first floor.)

West Elevation-

The Washington Street elevation of the original building (completed in 1904) is seven bays wide, with an additional bay to the south (completed in 1926) which is wider and stylistically distinct from the original design but still complimentary. The northwest corner of the building, facing Lafayette Square, is chamfered and entirely clad in white terra cotta, and reads as an additional bay. The main floor exterior consists of an arcade of wide segmental arched openings framed by terra cotta rusticated ashlar, set upon a stone base. The large keystones at the top of each arch feature cartouches framed by wreaths. The present main entrance is located in the fourth bay from the chamfered corner, which was the location of the original main entrance (which retains a small rectangular marquee suspended by chains from the façade). The present entrance (remodeled in 1956) is sheathed in plain stone panels and sheltered by a rectangular aluminum marquee with the name "Hotel Lafayette" in large raised white plastic letters facing the street. On either side of the marquee appears the word "Lafayette." (This entrance and an identical one on the Clinton Street elevation are the only significant changes that have been made to the original exterior elevations.) The southernmost bay consists of a plain terra cotta post-and-lintel design framing a small storefront (this was the entrance to the Lafayette Tap Room, a venerable local bar and grill that recently closed).

The second story (first floor) of the façade features a single large window above each arcaded bay of the main floor in the five-bay central section of the elevation and two large windows above the original end bay (Fig. 2). This story is of brick, with terra cotta belt courses at the sill and lintel level of the windows. Each large window is framed by terra cotta quoins topped by triangular pediments framing small cartouche and wreath designs, alternating with brick planar wall, except for the paired windows at the original corner bays, which are topped by the terra cotta balconies of the story above. Each large window opening on this story features a wrought iron railing. A pair of smaller windows, also framed in terra cotta, flanks the large window in the fourth bay from the north (above the entrance). There are also small windows between the large windows, between the second and third, fifth and sixth, and sixth and seventh bays from the northwest corner that are cut into the planar brick walls and have terra cotta sills only. (These smaller windows light the bathrooms.) An elaborate wrought iron bowed balcony is the notable feature of the chamfered corner at this story. The single bay of the southern addition has two windows and features a simplified version of the original second story treatment. The terra cotta belt courses continue into the addition and terra cotta quoins framing the windows and corners, echoing the original portion of the building. All of the hotel room windows in this building are non-historic aluminum replacements for the original one-over-one frame sash. These original windows still exist in the stairwells.

The next four stories duplicate the fenestration pattern of the second story, but these are simply treated openings in the solid red brick wall plane, with terra cotta sills and keystones. The exceptions are the end bays, which are framed in terra cotta for the entire height of the building; those at the third story (second floor) feature terra cotta balconies with wrought iron railings. At the sixth story of the fourth bay, there is a small terra cotta balcony

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with wrought iron railing, which is flanked by a pair of small windows. The four-story oriel window in the chamfered corner terminates in the sixth story, with a rounded glass top beneath a large cartouche and wreath; the oriel is also flanked by a pair of shield and wreath designs. The four stories of the southern addition feature window openings with terra cotta sills and lintels in the plain brick wall.

The top story is simply treated with alternating bands of brick and terra cotta sandwiched between a terra cotta belt course and a projecting terra cotta cornice (Fig. 3). The fenestration pattern is the same as on the third through fifth stories. A pair of terra cotta cartouches on flaming torches flanks the window of the fourth bay, while the pairs of windows in the original end bays flank stylized lion heads above plaques containing the letter "L" back to back. The same device appears in the chamfered bay, flanked by the pair of windows, which are in turn flanked by a pair of vertical modillions. The richly molded cornice is supported by modillions, which frame underside rosettes, and is crowned with cartouches alternating with fleur-de-lis motifs. The top story of the southern addition continues the raised belt course at sill level, and features simple quoins around the windows and corners. Above is a pair of cartouches at either end of the bay and a simple cornice supported by dentils.

North Elevation-

The Clinton Street elevation is seventeen bays wide (Fig. 1). These bays become progressively taller on Clinton Street as it slopes downward to the east; this allowed for windows to light the basement spaces below, but these openings have been bricked in. This elevation was built in two sections: The western nine bays constitute the original building (completed in 1904); the eastern eight bays constitute the addition (opened in 1912). The façade treatment is virtually identical to that of the east elevation facing Washington Street for the original section; it was only slightly modified for the addition. The ninth bay from Washington Street was the easternmost bay of the original building, and, like the first and seventeenth bay, is clad in terra cotta for its entire height. The principal difference between the Washington Street elevation and the original Clinton Street elevation is the entrance in the sixth bay. This entrance is reached by a set of steps rather than at grade, and the marquee extends over the two flanking bays as well; it is otherwise identical to the present Washington Street entrance, having also been remodeled in 1956. Four small windows on each of the upper stories instead of three on the Washington Street elevation represent another difference. These are set between the first and second, third and fourth, sixth and seventh, and seventh and eighth bays. The remaining eight bays of the addition duplicate the features of the original elevation, except that the small windows are eliminated and there is no entrance. The terra cotta balcony with iron railing at the easternmost bay of the third floor has been removed.

East Elevation-

The Ellicott Street consists of the seven story first addition of four bays (opened in 1912) and the two story, one bay ballroom, which was added to the south (completed in 1917; Fig. 4). This façade is raised on a high basement. The architectural vocabulary of the west and north elevations is repeated in this elevation, but the fenestration pattern is different. The main floor exterior consists of an arcade of four segmental arched openings framed by terra cotta rusticated ashlar, the piers being much wider here than on the previously noted elevations. The elevation above the southern bay of the seven story section contains three windows, while the other three bays contain two. The detailing of the west and north elevations is otherwise repeated here. The basement

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window in the northernmost bay has been bricked in, while those in the next two bays have been boarded over. A modern garage door in the fourth bay provides access to the basement interior. The ballroom elevation consists of a planar brick wall with terra cotta quoins framing the corners and a former large central window; the opening is now largely filled with stucco in which are set two small sash windows. Above the former opening which is a large triangular terra cotta pediment. Terra cotta belt courses on the addition tie into those at the sill and lintel level of the hotel proper and serve to unite the elevations.

South Elevation-

The southern elevation shows the irregular plan of the building, with five seven-story wings encompassing four light courts (Fig. 4). This facade is of unadorned brick construction, except for the small amount of terra cotta ornament that wraps around the corners from the east and west elevations. The eastern section (1909-1911) lacks the depth of the western section (1902-1904), reflecting the disparity in the lot sizes of the two sections. The two-story ballroom addition (1916-1917) and the addition of 1924-1926 to the west extend the building southward. The latter is only seven stories tall for the width of the westernmost wing on Washington Street; the remainder, which contains most of the Lafayette Tap Room, is only two stories tall, so that it did not cut off light to the light courts. The same is also true for the ballroom addition. The ballroom originally had three large windows facing the south, but they, like the one on the east elevation, have largely been filled in except for a small sash window in each former opening.

Interiors:

Lobby-

The hotel lobby is the most significantly altered space in the building. The lobby of 1902-1904 originally occupied the northwest corner of the main floor and measured 72 by 84 feet, with the main entrance through the chamfered corner facing Lafayette Square. It received natural light from the large windows of five bays along Washington Street and six along Clinton. A pair of widely separated cage elevators stood northwest of the location of the present elevators, and was fronted by a grand staircase, which utilized the same balusters still found on the upper floors. The decoration consisted of high wainscoting of Numidian marble with murals above; the numerous structural columns were painted in Numidian scagliola to harmonize with the wainscot, with a richly decorated ceiling above. (The lobby's decorative scheme can still be seen in the corridor of the 1909-1911 addition, which retains its identical ceiling and marble wainscot.) The lobby received minor alterations when the rest of the hotel's main floor was remodeled in 1909-1911. During the 1924-1926 remodeling, the south wall of the lobby was moved one bay southward, expanding the space. In 1928-1929, the present elevators were installed, placed on axis with the Washington Street entrance, and the old elevator shafts filled in. In 1942, the lobby was completely remodeled in the Art Moderne style; the grand staircase was removed and a smaller staircase installed to the north, and the original decoration was removed or covered. Very few alterations have been made to the space since its reconstruction. The northern section of the former lobby (three bays on Washington Street and all six bays on Clinton) became a store.

Both of the present main entrances lead directly to the lobby through short passageways. The present hotel lobby is an Art Moderne style space created in 1942 (Fig. 5). It is a largely symmetrical space bisected by an

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west-east axis extending from the main entrance on Washington Street to the pair of guest elevators at the east end of the space. The floor is polychromatic terrazzo laid in an abstract geometric pattern. Eight large smooth columns on octagonal bases of red Numidian marble dominate the room. This colonnade extends through the space from east to west. The center of the ceiling is recessed and flat, and is lit indirectly by a decorative ledge that extends around the room, rounded at the corners. In the center of the ceiling is a stalactite chandelier. The walls at the west end of the room have rounded corners of large radii. The hotel front desk is located along the south wall of the lobby, and there were commercial spaces along the north wall. There are two large murals of inlaid wood (a medium known as intarsia) on the north and south walls, with doors leading into the adjacent spaces, flanked by banks of windows. The south wall intarsia mural features the Buffalo River, with lake freighters within a canyon of grain elevators, while the north wall intarsia mural features a fighter aircraft flying above the Buffalo Airport (Fig. 6). On the east side of the elevators is a lounge room with a similar decorative treatment to the lobby; originally open to the lobby, it is now walled off but is largely intact. The lobby passageways to the streets were remodeled at the same time as the lobby itself, and still retain the natural finish Art Moderne woodwork and circular light fixtures suspended by decorative brackets. The passage from Washington Street is flanked to the north by a small shop and a store in the northwest corner of the main floor and to the south by a former coffee shop; both of these commercial spaces have been closed for some time.

Grill / Lafayette Room-

On the south side of the Clinton Street entrance corridor is a room now identified as an office, subdivided into small soundproof booths for a radio station within the last forty years (Fig. 7). This was the Dutch Grill Room in 1904 and was somewhat remodeled as the Lafayette Room in 1909-1911. Despite many modifications, it retains a high degree of its original integrity and is by far the best preserved public space from the original 1904 Bethune designed hotel. The original appearance of the space was described in 1904:

The woodwork in the grillroom and bar is Flemish oak. The decorations are on genuine leather, representing different studies of Falstaff, the execution of that work being hand tooled, divers colors being inserted. The drapings are of leather, and the windows have obscure leaded glass.¹

The remodeled space was given a more extensive description in 1912:

The principal public parlor or conversation room of the hotel for the comfort and convenience of men and women guests. It is a room 40x50 feet, with three large plate-glass windows opening high enough above the street to prevent intrusion. The room is designed in late English domestic style of the Elizabethan period and executed in English oak of soft brownish tint, which is reproduced in the furnishings. The draperies are deep antique blue. The ceiling is massive elliptical groins... The decorative scheme of this essentially English room commemorates America's emancipation from British rule. The massive carved oak fireplace from Knole House, Sevenoaks, the ancient seat of the Archbishops of Canterbury, has its large center panel occupied by a fine painting of the coat-of-arms of the Marquis de La Fayette... The lofty frieze which occupies the elliptical lunettes between the groins

¹ "New Hotel Opened." *Buffalo Express* (June 2, 1904)

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commemorate other Revolutionary patriots who were the young Lafayette's instructors in the principals of liberty.²

Although the fireplace appears to be gone, much of the plasterwork on the walls and ceiling is intact though damaged, the ceiling preserved above a later drop ceiling (Fig. 9). Two freestanding columns and pilasters along the walls support this vaulted ceiling. The warren of booths and offices below were constructed largely without disturbing the wood and plasterwork of the original space. The original quarry tile floor of the original space appears to be intact.

Corridor-

This space, part of the 1909-1911 Bethune addition, extends eastward from the lobby, with the grill / Lafayette room and dining room opening off the north side (Fig. 8). The treatment was identical to that in the original lobby, with a high wainscot of red Numidian marble, some of which appears to be intact beneath white paint. The rich plaster ceiling features heavy beams with rich classical ornamentation, also identical to that in the original lobby. The floor is of mosaic tile, while above there is one large leaded glass skylight visible near the west end of the corridor, another near the east end has been covered over. The space was originally described as "a spacious promenade, at once a picture gallery and reception-room,"³ and there remains one large painting attached to the wall on the north side of the corridor. Along the south wall of the corridor are a large ladies room, the foyer to the ballroom, and two coat rooms; one of these (labeled "Storage" on the plan) is richly paneled in dark natural wood, and may be what was once referred to as the Mahogany Room, possibly a private dining or meeting room.

Dining Room-

This large space, on the north side of the corridor and east of the grill / Lafayette room, is part of the 1909-1911 Bethune addition. Although significantly modernized after World War II, the room retains much detailing from its original appearance. It is bisected by three freestanding square columns and lit by large windows facing Clinton Street (Fig. 9). The Corinthian capitals of the columns and pilasters as well as the richly detailed cross beam ceiling rendered in plaster are original, as are the chandeliers; featuring an "L" for Lafayette, ones like these hung in most of the public spaces of the hotel, both original and addition. Sections of the original mosaic floor are also intact. The space received a festive postwar Art Moderne makeover in 1946: two freestanding columns were faced with mirrors for most of their height, while the pilasters and another column received high relief decorative detailing. The floor level was slightly raised on the south and west sides of the room, and separated from the lower floor by solid curving balustrades. To the east of the dining room, at the northeast corner of the principal floor, is a space most recently used as a serving kitchen, but details such as the mosaic floor suggest that it was originally a public space.

² "Built the Lafayette." *Buffalo Express* (June 16, 1912): 11

³ Ibid.

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Automobile Club Room-

South of the later service kitchen space, fronting on Ellicott Street, is a large room with a rich architectural treatment in plaster similar to the dining room, also part of the 1909-1911 Bethune addition. Now subdivided into small rooms with a drop ceiling, the room features pilasters supporting a beamed ceiling rendered in plaster. When the hotel addition opened this space was used as the downtown office of the Automobile Club of Buffalo, later part of the American Automobile Association (AAA), and served as such for several decades.

Ballroom Foyer-

This space links the western end of the ballroom with the corridor (Fig. 10). It is probably an adaptation of a room in the 1909-1911 addition that was built for a different purpose. Its most distinctive features are the large octagonal pilasters with Corinthian capitals supporting a heavy beamed ceiling, and the large scale broken pediment framing an urn above the entrance to the ballroom. The spaces between the large pilasters are divided in a way to suggest a two-story space, with smaller pilasters rising to a cornice two-thirds of the way up the wall.

Ballroom-

The largest public space in the building, the ballroom is situated in an addition constructed southeast of the hotel in 1916-1917. Unlike the other large spaces on the main floor, it is unobstructed by columns, as there are no guest room floors above (Fig. 11). The ceiling features large beams supported by fluted Corinthian pilasters along the side walls. The upper sections of the walls between the pilasters swag decoration in plaster relief. At the western end of the space is a small stage in the form of a semicircular exedra, which was added within the westernmost bay of the original space during the alterations to the hotel during 1924-1926. Three large windows on the south and one on the east originally lighted the space, but these have been filled in, and now contain small sash windows.

Lafayette Tap Room-

Located in the southwestern corner of the building, this was actually three spaces: a bar and restaurant to the west and a cocktail lounge to the east, linked by a foyer. This was the main floor of the 1924-1926 addition, and the entire space was originally the billiard room, but was immediately converted into a bar at the end of prohibition. The barroom features a long bar along the north wall, backed by neoclassical woodwork, while the south wall has a wainscot of Travertine marble (Fig. 12). The adjacent foyer features a large fireplace of Travertine marble. To the east is the lounge, dominated by a gold shallow vault ceiling supported by slender fluted pilasters. Important feature of this space are two large wall murals depicting the life of Lafayette.

Basement-

The basement extends beneath the entire building, and is now devoted to service uses; it extends beneath the sidewalks out to the street line. The original building of 1904 featured public spaces on this level, including a men's room, barber shop and a billiard room in the northwest corner. Although last used for that purpose in 1911, some elements of this space remain, such as sections of wall paneling. The men's room immediately to the east also retains some original elements, although both spaces are significantly deteriorated. To the south of these spaces are the boilers and physical plant of the hotel. This is the same location as when the hotel opened

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in 1904, but from 1910 to 1961, these facilities were located in a stand-alone building to the south. The hotel kitchen was located on the north side of the basement, directly beneath the dining room. Although some floor and wall ceramic tile are intact, the space has largely been stripped of equipment, and, like most of the basement, is used for storage. To the east of the former kitchen, at the northeast corner of the basement, is a former public dining room. This space featured natural wood paneling (much of it now painted) and was lit by large leaded glass windows facing the streets; these windows appear to be intact beneath plywood panels.

Upper Floors-

The second through seventh stories (known as the first through sixth floors) contain the guest rooms of the hotel. The plan of each of these floors is nearly identical, with five wings extending southward, separated by four light courts. The corridors are double loaded, allowing each room daylight exposure. The floors are accessed by two passenger and two service elevators, and by three staircases. These staircases retain their rich ironwork and the original reversible wood sash windows (Fig. 13); the windows in the guest rooms are all replacements. The corridors are wide, most notably at the spot where the original passenger elevators were once located (Fig. 14). The original six-panel doors are nearly all intact, although they were all updated by attaching plywood to each side to cover the paneling. All of the guest rooms have heavy porcelain built-in bathtubs and sinks, with tile wainscoting, although the original surfaces are now covered by a flecked substance that was intended to make them appear to be more modern. Most of the rooms contain only a bedroom and bathroom, but the accommodations at the northwest and northeast corners are two room suites (Fig. 15). Several of those on the northwest corner have fireplaces, while those at the northeast corner have pocket doors.

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Chronology of the Building's Construction and Alteration:

- 1899 Hotel for this site first mentioned (H. H. Little / Bethune, Bethune & Fuchs)
- 1900 Construction begins and stops at foundation (Henry Ives Cobb)
- 1902 Construction begins again, with new design (Bethune, Bethune & Fuchs)
- 1904 The original hotel is dedicated
- 1906 Expansion first proposed
- 1909 Construction begins on east addition (Bethune, Bethune & Fuchs)
- 1911 Addition is largely complete
- 1912 Addition is formally opened
- 1913 New marquee for main entrance (now gone); beginning of Esenwein & Johnson involvement
- 1914-1922 Bathroom alterations in original section (Esenwein & Johnson)
- 1916-1917 Ballroom addition (Esenwein & Johnson)
- 1924-1926 South addition, interior alterations (Esenwein & Johnson)
- 1928-1929 New elevators (Esenwein & Johnson)
- 1942 New main lobby installed (Roswell E Pfohl and Design, Inc)
- 1946 Dining room remodeled
- 1952 New windows installed in all guest rooms
- 1953 Television antenna installed
- 1956 New marquees at both entrances
- 1962 Sold by Yates family to Carter chain
- 1970 Dropped ceilings installed in main floor spaces
- 1978 Sold by Carter chain to Tran Dinh Truong

Hotel Lafayette

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8. Statement of Significance**Applicable National Register Criteria**

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- ☐ **A** Property associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ **B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ **C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or that represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ **D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all boxes that apply.)

- ☐ **A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ **B** removed from its original location
- ☐ **C** a birthplace or grave
- ☐ **D** a cemetery
- ☐ **E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure
- ☐ **F** a commemorative property
- ☐ **G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References**Bibliography**

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by historic American Building Survey

- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record

Areas of Significance:

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture**Period of Significance:**1902 -1929 (National)1900- 1946 (Local)**Significant Dates:**1900, 1902-1904, 1909-19121916-1917, 1924-1926, 1928-19291942, 1946**Significant Person:**N/A**Cultural Affiliation:**N/A**Architect/Builder:**Bethune, Bethune & Fuchs (1902-1912)Esenwein & Johnson (1913-1937)Roswell E. Pfohl/ Design Inc.(1942 Lobby)

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The Hotel Lafayette

The Hotel Lafayette in Buffalo, New York, is nationally significant as the most important extant design of Louise Bethune (1856-1913), the first female in the United States to be officially recognized as a professional architect by the American Institute of Architects (1888; Fellow in 1889) and the Western Association of Architects (1885), the two professionally accepted organizations during late-nineteenth century. In 1885, the Western Association of Architects defined a professional architect as, "a professional person whose sole occupation is to supply all data preliminary to the material, construction and completion of a building and to exercise administrative control over contractors supplying material and labor . . . and [over] the arbitration of contracts stipulating terms of obligation and fulfillment between proprietor and contractor."⁴ Shortly after announcing the opening of her firm in 1881 at the Ninth Congress of the Association for the Advancement of Women⁵ held in Buffalo, Bethune's firm achieved tremendous professional success in Western New York over the next three decades, designing a variety of buildings adding to the diverse architectural fabric of one of the nation's largest cities at the turn of the century.

Architectural critic Ada Louise Huxtable noted that architecture was the last profession to be "liberated" by women.⁶ Though well known locally, Louise Bethune never achieved national attention during her life. However, Bethune's greatest impact was opening the doors in professional circles for other women to enter the field of architecture, leading by way of her commitment to the development of professional standards in the profession and the promotion of "Equal Remuneration for Equal Services" for women. In 1891, giving a speech titled "Woman and Architecture" before an audience at the Women's Educational and Industrial Union in Buffalo, Bethune remarked about women in architecture, "The future of women in the architectural profession is what she herself sees fit to make it."⁷ Simultaneously to this speech she declined an invitation to compete in the design of the Woman's Building at the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition, citing the difference between the women's prize of \$1,000 prize versus the men's of \$10,000.⁸ In response to questions about the Women's Building competition, Bethune stated, "It is an unfortunate precedent to establish right now, and it may take years to live down its effects." She was correct in her assumption, as it would take generations of women years to gain full acceptance and equal pay in the field of architecture. Her work to equalize the disparities between men and women would be continued on by other notable women in the profession throughout the Twentieth Century.

⁴ Johanna Hays, "Louise Blanchard Bethune: Architect Extraordinaire and First American Woman Architect, Practiced in Buffalo, New York (1881-1905)." Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Alabama, 2007, 177.

⁵ The Association was founded in 1873 by leading feminists, such as Mary S. Livermore and Julia Ward Howe, to "secure to women higher intellectual, moral, and physical conditions." This history, drawn up for the World's Columbia Exposition in 1893, lists the Association's membership, chronicles the events of its annual meetings, and includes several opening addresses.

http://openlibrary.org/b/OL13454068M/Historical_account_of_the_Association_for_the_Advancement_of_Women_1873-1893

⁶ Ada Louise Huxtable, "The Last Profession to be 'Liberated' by Women." *New York Times*, March 3, 1977, 25.

⁷ Louise Bethune, "Women and Architecture," *Inland Architect and News Record*, 17(March 1891), 20-21, reprinted in Hays, *op. cit.*, 333.

⁸ The prize would be claimed by Sophia Hayden, the first woman to graduate from the M.I.T. School of Architecture. She retired from the field shortly after the Exposition, allegedly due to the harsh criticism of the design.

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The full sense of Louise Bethune's impact is articulated in the design for the Hotel Lafayette, her largest and most highly designed extant work in the United States. Built at a time when many emerging female architects were bound to residential design, a practice which Bethune stated as, "the most pottering and worst - paid work an architect ever does," her firm designed a large and diverse collection of commercial, civic, and industrial buildings in Western New York, demonstrating that the designs of a women were not limited to domestic architecture. Though much of the architect's designs have been lost, the Hotel Lafayette stands today as the eminent example from Louise Bethune's diverse body of work.

Under National Register Criterion C, the Hotel Lafayette is nationally significant in area of architecture as the most prominent and highly styled design of Louis Bethune. Locally the building is significant under Criteria C as one of the finest examples of a grand early-Twentieth Century hotel in the City of Buffalo and a remarkably intact example of the French Renaissance style of architecture. Nationally, the period of significance has been set from 1902, the beginning of Louis Bethune's involvement in the building's design, until 1929, when the last alteration to the building was completed in harmony to the original Bethune design. Locally, the building's period of significance begins in 1900, when the foundation was laid in preparation for the Pan American Exposition, until 1946, when the hotel underwent a series of interior updates during the World War II period.

Louise Bethune (1856-1913)

Born Jennie Louise Blanchard in Waterloo, N.Y., she was the only child of two educators. The family moved to Buffalo early in her life. She became interested in architecture at an early age and studied for two years in hopes of entering the recently founded architecture school at Cornell University. Instead, she entered the profession in the traditional way, through apprenticeship under established architects. In 1876, Miss Blanchard entered the office of Richard A. Waite, one of the leading architects in Buffalo. Over a five year period under Waite's tutelage, she learned every aspect of the profession, from drawing board design to construction supervision. During this period, she also worked for Frank W. Caulkins, another prominent local practitioner. Her apprenticeship was an amazing achievement for the period, but once trained she was not content to work for others.

Owing to the general prejudice that existed at the time against women in the workplace, it would have proved exceedingly difficult for Louise to obtain enough work to maintain an independent practice. Therefore, she almost immediately formed a partnership with her husband Robert A. Bethune (1855-1915), whom she had just married. A native of Ontario, Robert Bethune first worked for the noted architect Gordon W. Lloyd in Detroit before finding a position in Waite's office in the late 1870s. In October 1881, she announced the opening of her architectural office at the Ninth Congress of the Association for the Advancement of Women held in Buffalo.⁹ Adriana Barbasch notes in her section of the book, Architecture: A Place for Women, that Bethune's announcement marked the first public entry by a woman into the profession of architecture.¹⁰

⁹ Belva Ann Lockwood, noted suffragist and presidential candidate, would also address the crowd at this event.

¹⁰ Barbasch, Architecture: A Place for Women- pg. 17

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Although it was Louise who founded the new firm, their practice initially appeared in listings solely under her husband's name, "R. A. Bethune." In 1886, however, it became "R. A. & L. Bethune," with Louise's name listed in second place. It may have been that the roles of Robert and Louise were analogous to those of the members of the Chicago firms of Burnham & Root and Adler & Sullivan, where the first-named partner got the work and dealt with the clients and contractors and the second-named partner did most of the designing in the office. This theory is supported by an 1893 article noting that "Mrs. Bethune has for some years taken entire charge of the office work and complete superintendence of one-third of the outside work."¹⁰ The husband and wife team soon met with success, and in 1890/91 they acquired a third partner, William L. Fuchs, a longtime draftsman with the firm.

Louise Bethune was very active both in advancing the stature of women in the architectural profession and in promoting the profession in general. In 1885, she became the first woman member of the Western Association of Architects (WAA), a dynamic young group of practitioners that was pressing for professional standards and challenging the supremacy of the well-established American Institute of Architects (AIA). Louise became the first woman member of the latter national profession association in 1888. When the two groups merged in 1889 to form a new AIA, all WAA members became AIA Fellows, another first for Louise Bethune. (Robert Bethune and William Fuchs did not join the AIA until 1901.) She was also a founder of the Buffalo Society of Architects in 1886, which became the local AIA chapter four years later.

In the 1880s, the Bethune office became one of the most prominent in Western New York, executing a wide variety of commissions. Among the most substantial were the Seventy-fourth Regiment Armory (1886) and the Livestock Exchange (1890) in Buffalo, and the high school (1890) at Lockport, N.Y. (all demolished). The firm was especially noted for its educational work, designing eighteen schools and additions in Buffalo and the surrounding communities. Sadly, none of these are extant. Bethune, Bethune & Fuchs also established a reputation for the design of industrial buildings. But most of these additionally have been lost. The former Iroquois Door Company at Larkin and Exchange Streets in Buffalo is one of the few to survive.

The Hotel Lafayette, one of many notable buildings the firm designed in downtown Buffalo, is the most significant work of Bethune, Bethune & Fuchs still standing. Unfortunately, the last three decades of the twentieth century saw the demolition of at least seven of their other downtown buildings. Two of these went down despite being included in the locally designated Theater Historic District. The most intact structures by the firm to remain in the downtown area are a former stable at 177-179 Elm Street (1891) and a richly embellished commercial building at 621-623 Main Street (1908).¹¹ Ironically, in view of Louise's statement that residential design was the most troublesome and least remunerative line of architectural work, most of the firm's surviving work are houses in the city of Buffalo, including the Kellogg house at 211 Summer Street, personally designed by Louise.

¹¹ The firm did not specialize in residential design, but ironically this is their most extant building type; among the best remaining examples are 35 Richmond Ave. (1883), 211 Summer St. (1885), 436 Franklin St. (1890), 193 Ashland Ave. (1895) and 165 Lexington Ave. (1899).

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Louise Bethune was the chief designer of the Hotel Lafayette, the crowning monument of her career as well as that of her office. In addition to the implication of the 1893 article previously noted, at least two contemporary articles reference her role in the design. Describing the addition in 1911, the national periodical *Hotel Monthly* noted that, "The lay-out of the floors was designed by Mrs. Bethuen [sic],⁶ and her obituary stated that, "Mrs. Bethune took special pride in the work she did for the Hotel Lafayette company."⁷ Robert Bethune was the public face of the firm, demonstrated during the construction of the Hotel Lafayette, when he gave extensive interviews about the building's progress to the press. He stated that this was the first large building to be built in downtown Buffalo without a general contractor. (Instead, the individual contracts were separately let, with the architects themselves closely supervising each contract. The largest contract was let to Niederpruem, Gibbs & Schaaf for the masonry and carpentry, while iron and steel went to the Buffalo Structural Steel Co. and tile fireproofing to John Lyth & Sons, all of Buffalo.)

Bethune evidently retired at the time the addition she had designed to the Hotel Lafayette was being completed in late 1911. She died two years later and was buried in Buffalo's Forest Lawn Cemetery where the local AIA chapter has erected a bronze plaque in her honor. Her husband Robert died in early 1915. Fuchs continued to operate the firm under his own name, but little is known of his work before he dissolved the practice during the Great Depression.

Louise Bethune occupies a foremost place in the select pantheon of early women architects in America. Ironically, many other women architects have achieved more recognition for their careers and greater scholarly study has been dedicated to their body of work. Women including Theodota Pope Riddle¹² (1867-1946), Julia Morgan (1872-1957), Mary Jane Colter¹³ (1869-1958), and, to a lesser degree, Lutah Marie Riggs¹⁴ (1896-1984), have all been rightfully acknowledged for their contribution to the advancement of women in architecture. Like Bethune, these architects cast their designs in established styles of their times, however most worked for more nationally visible clients, unlike Bethune who's practical and often utilitarian designs were

¹² Theodota Pope Riddle was active in the field of architecture from the 1890s until the early 1940s. She was the first woman to be licensed to practice architecture both in her native Connecticut and in New York. Among her lucrative commissions are Hill-Stead (1998-1901), the 250-acre family estate that Riddle designed in Farmington, CT (NHL), and the Arts and Crafts campus of Avon Old Farms School in Avon, CT, on which she worked from 1918 to 1927. The late architectural critic Brendan Gill declared Riddle to be one of the ten most important women architects of the twentieth century. Riddle is the subject of a biography by Sandra L. Katz published in 2003.

¹³ From 1902 to 1948 Mary Jane Colter enjoyed renown as a designer of restaurants and hotels for the Santa Fe Railroad where she employed her love of native American motifs in decorative details. Her Hopi House (1905) in the Grand Canyon National Park imitated the pueblos of the southwest. Colter designed a number of other buildings on the South Rim of Grand Canyon National Park, including Hermit's Rest (1914), Lookout Studio (1914), Indian Watchtower at desert View (1932). These buildings have been designated National Historic Landmarks.

¹⁴ As the first California woman to be named a Fellow by the AIA and the first architect ever to be named a person of the year by the Los Angeles Times (1967), Lutah Marie Riggs (1896-1984) had a significant impact on the raising the profile of women in the profession, especially in the Western United States. Educated at the University of California at Berkeley, where she earned her degree in architecture in 1919, Riggs enjoyed a successful career in Santa Barbara, CA. She designed many houses in the Santa Barbara area as well as the Vedanta Temple and the expansion of the El Paseo historic complex, a commission that added awareness of historic preservation to the impact she had made on the practice of American architecture

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overlooked by the architectural press. Additionally, location may have contributed to why Bethune's work has been overlooked for a large part of the Twentieth Century. While Buffalo once ranked as the eighth largest city in the United States, the second half of the Twentieth Century saw a dramatic reduction in population, leaving much of the city's architecture vulnerable to deterioration and threatened by demolition. Recognition of Bethune's professional achievement did not begin until the women's rights campaigns of the 1960s, a period of time when scholars started to examine women who had made historic "Firsts." Despite the discovery of Bethune, many of her firm's designs were simultaneously being swallowed up by Urban Renewal throughout 1960s and 1970s. Today there is a greater appreciation and study dedicated to Bethune, with local exhibits featuring the architect's work and the Buffalo chapter of the Society of Architectural Historians named in her honor, however, what remains of her architecture continues to be threatened.

Louise Bethune and Women in American Architecture

In 1857, the architect Calvert Vaux wrote in his book *Villas and Cottages* that "there is no doubt that the study of domestic architecture is well suited to a feminine taste, and it has, moreover, so many ramifications, that it affords frequent opportunities for turning good abilities to profitable account; for if we even allow the objections that might be raised by some against the actual practice of architecture by women, such as the necessity for their climbing ladders, mingling with the mechanics and laborers during the progress of the works, and having frequently to attend to the superintendence of buildings in disagreeable weather, and at all sorts of different levels, we must, nevertheless, see at once that there is nothing in the world, except want of inclination and opportunity, to prevent many of them from being thoroughly expert in architectural drawings, or from designing excellent furniture, paper-hangings, draperies, carpets, or decorations . . ." He did not include in the difficulties that women would have to overcome to enter the building arts professions "want of natural ability, for it certainly does not exist."

Vaux was one of the advance guard of architects who after the Civil War sought to establish architecture as a profession in America, and even lent his office for use of early meetings of the AIA. In comparison to the opinions of many of his colleagues, his views about women in the profession were well in advance of the times, for there would be stiff resistance to the acceptance of women in the architectural profession over the next decades. Even when the training of architects moved out of the age old apprentice system into the realm of an academic discipline taught at universities, these institutions did not open their doors to women candidates. Louise Bethune learned her trade following the apprentice system; Theodora Pope Riddle (1868-1946) was compelled to hire personal tutors to achieve her goal of becoming an architect. Cornell University, one of the first to establish an architectural program was the first to graduate a woman student, Margaret Hicks, from the program in 1880; eleven years later MIT gave a degree to Sophia Hayden, its first woman to complete its architectural program. Generally, quotas for women students in all disciplines were kept low at American universities until World War I caused them to be relaxed because of the drop in male applicants.

Louise Bethune (1856-1913), who was born the year before Calvert Vaux published his declaration regarding female architects, pioneered the entry of women into the American architectural profession. While Bethune did not forge a new style of architecture or foster a movement within the field, such as H. H.

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Richardson or Frank Lloyd Wright¹⁵, encouraged by force of her example and public pronouncements, a revolution in the discipline she so dearly loved would begin. In 1891 she gave what was probably the first public utterance by a woman architect encouraging other of her gender to enter the profession and outlining what it would take for them to succeed. It was a talk before the Women's Educational and Industrial Union in Buffalo. Her remarks reached a national audience when they were published in the trade journal *Inland Architect*.¹⁶ Among other things, she told listeners that:

there is no need whatever of a woman architect. No one wants her, no one yearns for her and there is no special line in architecture to which she is better adapted than a man . . . [The woman architect] has exactly the same work to do as a man. When a woman enters the profession she will be met kindly and will be welcome but not as a woman, only as an architect.

There are among [women graduates] a few brilliant and energetic women for whom the future holds great possibilities.

There are also a few women drafting in various offices through the country . . . They shirk the brick-and-mortar-rubber-boot-and-ladder-climbing period of investigative education, and as a consequence remain at the tracing stage of draftsmanship. There are hardly more successful women draftsmen than women graduates, but the next decade will doubtless give us a few thoroughly efficient architects from their number.

*The objects of the business woman are quite distinct from those of the professional agitator. Her aims are conservative rather than aggressive, her strength lies in adaptability, not in reform, and her desire is to conciliate rather than to antagonize.*¹⁷

Whether these comments ever reached the small crop of women making attempts to break into the field is unknown. However, the period after Bethune's speech saw a handful of female architects emerging throughout the United States. The first decades of the Twentieth Century in particular reflect a fruitful period of time when some women would emerge as heads of their own firms, complete large scale commissions, and create distinctive bodies of work.

While Louise Bethune did not favor the practice of residential design, this was nonetheless an area of the field that was most accessible to women. One such woman to gain success in the area and achieve several other notable milestones during her career was Lois Lilley Howe (1864-1964). Born in Cambridge, MA, Howe

¹⁵ Wright would employ two women after he was dismissed from Louis Sullivan's office and subsequently formed his Oak Park Studio. Marion Mahony and Isabel Roberts were among Wright's inner circle in the early Prairie School years, working in drafting and design. Both would go on to have successful careers after parting ways with Wright.

¹⁶ See note 7.

¹⁷ Quoted in Adrianna Barbasch, "Louise Blanchard Bethune: The AIA Accepts its First Woman Member," in E. P. Berkeley (ed.), *Architecture, A Place for Women* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1989), 22. The full text of Bethune's article is reprinted in Hays, *op. cit.*, appendix E. Hays also lists Bethune's commissions in Appendix A.

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entered the M.I.T. School of Architecture in 1888. After coming in second place behind classmate Sophia Hayden for the competition for the Women's Building at the 1893 Columbian Exposition, she received her first residential commission in 1894 and would subsequently work independently and for other firms until 1900, when she officially established her own firm. In 1901, Howe became the second woman to be admitted into the AIA (Fellow 1931)¹⁸. M.I.T graduates Eleanor Manning O'Connor (1884-1973) would be upgraded from draftsmen to partner in 1913 and Mary Almy (1885-1967) would be added in 1927. The firm established as Howe, Manning & Almy is largely recognized as the first successful professionally trained women's architecture firm in the United States. Throughout the various stages of Howe's firms, successes would be predominately in domestic architecture; however the firm's greatest impacts would be in their contributions to urban housing issues during the post-World War I period. The interest in constructing 'Small Houses' or worker's housing became the firms chief scholarly pursuit, sitting on numerous boards and committees, including the Architect's Small Houses Service Bureau of the A.I.A. While balancing their residential designs and developing urban planning issues, the firm was commissioned for a variety of designs, including some of the first public housing in Boston, MA, small houses in Mariemont, OH; one of the nations's first planned communities, and significant number of National Register listed residences in the Northeast. The firm dissolved in 1937 amid Howe's retirement and the firm's struggles during the Great Depression, though all three partners would continue in various areas of the field.

Perhaps one of the most successful female architects to arise during the early decades of the Twentieth Century was Julia Morgan. A native of California and one of the first women to be admitted to the University of California at Berkeley, Morgan studied engineering in the early 1890s after which she went to Paris and, like many of her male counterparts at the time, studied architecture at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts. In 1904, at the age of thirty-two, Morgan returned from Paris and set up her practice in San Francisco. Over her long career, her office would be responsible for over eight hundred commissions, mostly in the Bay Area, including six buildings on the campus of Mills College (1904) at Oakland. Like Bethune, though on a much larger scale, Morgan would produce a wide variety of designs and architectural types for different clients. Of these clients, Morgan's most famous patron was William Randolph Hearst. Completing several designs for Hearst, including Los Angelous Examiner Building, Marion Davies 'Ocean House,' and perhaps Morgan's most famous design, the flamboyant Spanish Baroque style home, *La Cuesta Encantada* at San Simeon. Begun in 1919, the palatial estate occupied Morgan for over twenty years. Together with her YWCA Asilomar Conference Grounds (she designed many YWCA facilities, all in the Mediterranean Revival style), San Simeon is listed as a National Historic Landmark. Julia Morgan, who is the subject of several monographs and whose architecture the National Park Service featured during Women's History Month in 2000, had a significant impact on the national acceptance of women in the architectural profession. In the words of architectural historian Richard Longstreth, "she was probably the first woman to study in the architecture section of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts and was also one of the first women to sustain a long-standing and well-known practice in the USA."¹⁹

¹⁸ Though officially sponsored by architect Robert Swain, this event was later remarked upon by architect C.H. Blackwell as only occurring because the AIA members mistook the name 'Lois' for 'Louis.'

¹⁹ Richard Longstreth. "Morgan, Julia." *Grove Art Online. Oxford Art Online*. 13 Apr. 2010
<<http://www.oxfordartonline.com/subscriber/article/grove/art/T059611>>.

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Louise Bethune would not live to see the apex of success of her peers Lois Lilley Howe, Julia Morgan, and the many others that followed. After Bethune's death professional organizations would come into being to foster female progress in the profession, notably La Confrerie Alongine (founded in St. Louis in 1915) and the Association of Women in Architecture (founded in Los Angeles in 1922). However, negative attitudes regarding women in the profession would persist, despite the success of Morgan and others. In the 1950s, Pietro Belluschi, the dean of MIT's School of Architecture remarked that "it takes an exceptional girl to make a go of it. If she insisted upon becoming an architect, I would try to dissuade her." In addition, in 1951, Joseph Hudnut, dean of Harvard's prestigious Graduate School of Design publically expressed the view that it was a waste of time to educate women for the profession because they were likely to give up their careers in favor of motherhood and family life.²⁰

Despite negative attitudes from their male counterparts, women would continue to become more integrated into field of architecture throughout the second half of the Twentieth Century. In 1954, Norma Merrick Sklarek became the first licensed black woman to enter the field of architecture, as well as becoming the first black woman to achieve Fellow status in the AIA in 1980. Architect and urban planner, Denise Scott Brown who, together with her husband, Robert Venturi, has exerted considerable influence on American architecture since the 1960s, both through the example of her work and through the impact of her writings. In 1981, 21 year old Yale architecture student Maya Lin won a public design competition for her design for the Vietnam Veterans Memorial and has since gone on to have successful career in memorial landscape architecture. Other latter-day women Fellows of the AIA include Natalie De Bois, Katherine Diamond, Sarah P. Harkness, Jane Hastings, and Laurie Maurer.

While many would say that the field of architecture remains predominantly male, much has changed since Louise Bethune spoke of women entering the profession. It was the public efforts of Bethune and the professional examples set by her and the ensuing generations of female architects that would make strides to end the bias against women. In 1891, Louise Bethune stated, "When a woman enters the profession she will be met kindly and will be welcome but not as a woman, only as an architect." The architect deduced that the construction of a building does not require a person of a specific gender, but that of a professional whose job is to ethically create buildings with respect to their client and to the integrity of their profession.

The American Institute of Architects (AIA) and the Professionalization of Architecture in the United States

Beginning in the late 1850s, architecture, like other professions in America, began the process of professionalization. In February 1857, Richard Upjohn, one of the most respected architects in New York City, convened a group of like-minded colleagues with the intention of forming an organization that would promote the standardization of building practices. As a result of that meeting the American Institute of Architects was soon formed, with Philadelphia architect Thomas U. Walter suggesting the name. (Others had favored the more parochial "New York Society of Architects.") Under Upjohn's leadership, a constitution and bylaws were

²⁰ See Norma Sklarek, "Women in Architecture," *Encyclopedia of Architecture, Design, Engineering and Construction* (New York: John Wiley, 1989), V, 342.

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drawn up which the membership approved in April 1857. Among the chief issues that the new organization concerned itself with were the establishment of standard fees for services and the formulation of fair practices to govern competitions. The latter issue was especially vexing, because at the time, competitors received nothing for the detailed drawings and research required to submit an entry in a competition. The "competition is an evil against which the entire profession has striven for years," declared Louise Bethune.²¹ The young AIA undertook to educate both members and competition sponsors on the issue. Despite this promising art, unfortunately, the new organization suffered a loss of momentum with the onset of the Civil War.

After the war, architects in New York renewed their quest for professional status. In 1867, the former group of men reorganized themselves under a new constitution and by-laws. Upjohn again assumed the role of the organization's first president. From that date forward, the AIA grew in numbers and influence and became, in the Twentieth Century, a nationwide organization that most fully represents the interest of architects and men and women in sister occupations. In order to increase its visibility among architects, the young AIA instituted a policy of establishing local chapters. By the 1880s, there were chapters in Chicago, Philadelphia, Boston, Baltimore, Buffalo, and elsewhere. In 1886, Louise Bethune played a contributing role in organizing the Architects Association of Buffalo, which in 1891 became the Buffalo Chapter of the American Institute of Architects. (Bethune was an officer in 1895-1896.) The AIA also began the tradition of annual conventions and established a committee system to deal with specific issues and problems facing the profession. The first two permanent committees reflected two chief concerns of the members: education and the dissemination of accurate information about building practices. The Committee on Education and the Committee on the Library and Publications would do much to achieve the goal of standardizing architectural practice throughout the country.

In 1889, the AIA was greatly enlarged by merging with the Western Association of Architects, a rival association that had grown up in the Midwest and which primarily consisted of members in the Midwest and South. It had been founded in 1884 with Chicago architect John Wellborn Root as its president. (Louise Bethune was a member of both organizations—her entry into the WAA [prior to her enrollment in the AIA] was promoted by Daniel Burnham, the dean of Chicago architects. At the time, her husband, Robert, withdrew his application for membership in favor of his wife; "She has done the work by herself, and been very successful," observed the organization president, Charles E. Illsley.²²) The two organizations amalgamated now into a single entity under the AIA name and charter. This charter provided for female membership. Bethune herself praised the organization for this broad-minded policy. "The great architectural societies of the country, the American Institute and its state and city Chapters," she stated, "are all open to [women] upon proof of qualification. Thank, with me, the noble hearted men show far-seeing polity and kindly nature has laid this stepping-stone."²³

In 1898, the new AIA determined to increase its national posture and established a national headquarters in Washington. The organization at first leased and then purchased the Octagon, a historic house designed by William Thornton, architect of the U. S. Capitol. It remains today the AIA headquarters.

²¹ Bethune, "Women and Architecture," (1891), in Hays, *op. cit.* 333.

²² Hays, *op. cit.*, 182.

²³ Bethune, "Women and Architecture," (1891), reprinted in Hays, *op. cit.*, 331.

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During the late-Nineteenth and early-Twentieth Centuries, the AIA achieved its goal of professionalizing the field of architecture. One of the most important ways that this was brought about was by the establishment of architecture as an academic discipline taught at the university level. In 1865, MIT started the first architecture school in the United States, with William R. Ware, an AIA trustee, as its head. (Bethune was of the opinion that the MIT program, which she said was modeled on that of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris, offered "special advantages to pupils who have received previous office training."²⁴) Programs at the University of Illinois (1870), Cornell University (1871), Syracuse University (1873), University of Pennsylvania (1874), the University of Michigan (1876), and the Illinois Institute of Technology (1889) soon followed it. (An IIT instructor had told Bethune that "a woman pupil submitted the boldest design of the year, while the most effeminate was the work of a man."²⁵) AIA members directed all of these institutional programs.

By 1900, the AIA had over one thousand members. A new constitution adopted in 1900 stated its aims as "to organize and unite in fellowship the architects of the United States of America, and to combine their efforts so as to promote the artistic, scientific, and practical efficiency of the profession." This would gradually come to include more women as equal partners with men in this endeavor. In the following decades, as the concept and practice of architecture evolved, the mission of the AIA was expanded, and a broader definition of purpose was adopted in 1957 that reflected the fully evolved profession of architecture. Employing gender neutral language, it reads:

To organize and unite in fellowship the architects of the United States of America; to combine their efforts so as to promote the aesthetic, scientific and practical efficiency of the profession; to advance the science and art of planning and building by advancing the standards of architectural education, training and practice; to coordinate the building industry and the profession of architecture to insure the advancement of the living standards of our people through their improved environment; and to make the profession of ever-increasing service to society.

The Early Twentieth-Century American Hotel

Early-Twentieth-Century Hotels represent some of the largest, and at times, most complex building types in many American cities. These buildings contain rooms of all shapes and sizes, from the small "sample" rooms used by traveling salesmen to the enormous banquet halls, ballrooms, and lobbies that served as settings for some of the city's most important civic events. The privately owned large hotel provided an important oasis of calm and order in the often turbulent urban environment.¹ Thus, historian Robert Bruegmann summed up the great significance of the large urban hotel in the life of the city, not only for visitors, but also for the city's residents. The complexity of this building type was a challenge for architects:

For the architect the task of designing a hotel was nothing less than accommodating many of the most disparate functions of the city in a single building on a restricted site. All the hotel's activities had to be orchestrated so guests and employees, visitors and delivery people could each circulate freely without

²⁴ Bethune, "Women and Architecture," in Hays, *op. cit.* 332.

²⁵ *Ibid.*

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unduly impinging on one another. This caused endless difficulties in plan, equipment, and structure. The desire to put large public rooms on the lower floors for easy access from the streets, to cite just one example, posed major problems for the structural engineers, who had to find ways of supporting thousands of tons of walls, corridors, and furniture of the small guest rooms directly over the large, uninterrupted spans of the rooms on the lower floors.²⁶

At the Hotel Lafayette, Bethune, Bethune & Fuchs eschewed the employment of the heavy steel trusses required for large, uninterrupted spans over the first floor spaces (and the attendant loss of usable space in the floor above); instead, the structural columns rose from basement to roof, and were decoratively integrated into the design of the first floor spaces. After the functional requirements were met, other seemingly irreconcilable demands involved image and style. The hotel had to be intimate and homelike but at the same time grand enough to served as the setting for some of the city's most important events. It had to seem luxurious but at the same time be efficient, easy to clean, and inexpensive to maintain. The decorations had to look up-to-date but at the same time feel comfortable and reassuring.²⁷ In 1916, architect C. Matlack Price described the purpose behind the stylistic choices for hotels at the time:

American hotel architecture emerged from absolute banality at about the time of the general architectural awakening of the country, and after the erection of the Waldorf [1893] in New York City, the prevalent "hotel style" followed suit, taking the form of a composite adaptation of the French styles of Louis XIV, Louis XV and Louis XVI. Structures were reared more enormous in bulk than the greatest French palaces or châteaux, and hotel interiors were made magnificent and sumptuous to a superlative degree by the use of ornamental marbles, mirrors and gilt.

The adaptation of this "magnificent" style for the large hotel has been severely but not intelligently criticized by many, on the ground that it is vulgar and ostentatious. It should be remembered, however, that the large city hotel is a building with a definite intention – it is intended to attract, impress and, if possible, flatter the traveling public. It cannot be denied that regal French architecture attracts and speaks in a universal language to all beholders, symbolizing opulence, richness and a certain kind of social distinction. It has a splendid self-assurance, even if it may be said to lack repose. And for these same reasons it is impressive. Hotel managers were quick to appreciate the fact that architecture is one of the most theatrical of the arts – that a certain impression may be more readily received, even though unconsciously, by a greater number of people through the architectural guise of a building than through any other means. Thus, the great marble lobbies, the gilded dining-rooms, the vistas of mirrors and palms in the modern hotel are but theatrical scenery, devised by the manager to make his venture a success, and the people eating, promenading or dancing in this intentionally gorgeous environment are the unconscious actors...

²⁶ Robert Bruegmann. *The Architects and the City: Holabird & Roche of Chicago, 1880-191*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997), 39.

²⁷ Ibid.

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Further evidence of the desire to please on the part of hotel management is to be seen in the diversity of styles often found in the interior decoration of a single hotel, as well as in the "special" rooms which are constantly offered to meet the continuous public demand for "novelty." One will find a Louis XIV dining-room, a "Marie Antoinette" tea-room, a ball-room resplendent in Louis XV rococo, and an "Old Nuremberg" rathskeller, or grill-room downstairs. Greater diversity may be offered in the form of an "Egyptian Room" or a "Pompeian Room" – yet the charge of "inconsistency" must fall flat when it is remembered that these things are devised to entertain, just as a varied musical program is devised to entertain.²⁸

Hotels in Buffalo at the Turn of the Twentieth Century

Downtown Buffalo had an array of transient accommodations at the dawn of the Twentieth Century. Many were located near the southern side of the business core, near the railroad stations. Most predated the Civil War, including the Mansion House (c. 1840, owned by Philipp Dorsheimer, friend of Abraham Lincoln) at Main and Exchange Streets and the United States Hotel, (c. 1840) on the Lower Terrace at Pearl Street. There were also accommodations further up town, such as the Tiff House (1865), located on Main Street just north of Lafayette Square. The grandest hotels in downtown Buffalo, all of which were more than ten years old in 1900, were the Genesee Hotel (1882) at Main and Genesee Streets, the Broezel Hotel (1889) at Seneca and Wells Streets and the Iroquois (1889) at Main and Eagle Streets. The latter was the premier hostelry in the city. Unfortunately, all of these hotels have been demolished.²⁹

The approach of the 1901 Pan-American Exposition produced a great increase in hotel rooms to accommodate the anticipated crowds. Much of the increase, however, resulted from the remodeling of existing buildings. Practically every significant apartment building erected during the preceding decade was converted into a hotel, and several remained apartment hotels after the close of the exposition. (One such example is the Lenox Hotel of 1896 at 150 North Street.) Temporary hotels were also built, and several existing downtown hotels received additions. Most notably, the Iroquois Hotel was enlarged by a three-story, steel-framed Mansard roof perched atop the original load bearing walls. At the same time, the principal spaces of the ground floor were completely rebuilt. Many schemes for new hotel buildings were also floated, but only one, the Hotel Lafayette, came to fruition, and that was after the Exposition closed.

Early Plans for the Hotel Lafayette, 1899-1901

The Hotel Lafayette had an unusually long gestation period. In early 1899, plans were first noted for a hotel at the southeast corner of Washington and Clinton Streets, then occupied by the Eglise Francaise St. Pierre (1844), a small brick building commonly known as the "French church." The architect for the project, that might have included a theater, was H. H. Little. By the fall of 1899, another local firm, Bethune, Bethune & Fuchs, were noted as architects for the hotel, which was now projected to be twelve stories tall and contain 300

²⁸ Matlack C. Price, *The Practical Book of Architecture*. (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1916), 100.

²⁹ One of Buffalo's most widely nineteenth-century known hotels, Pierce's Palace Hotel (1877), stood quite a distance north of downtown. A grandiose Second Empire confection, it overlooked Prospect Park near the Niagara River. Popular with invalids and convalescents, it was destroyed by fire in 1881.

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guest rooms and to have no theater. Although one of the most prominent architectural offices in Buffalo, Bethune, Bethune & Fuchs had little experience with planning and designing such a complicated building type as a grand hotel. Their choice as designers for the project may have been due to the fact that two of the promoters of the scheme, Charles A. Pooley and Joseph A. Oaks, were also directors of the Jav-O Cereal Coffee Company. In 1898, Bethune, Bethune & Fuchs had designed their factory (demolished) on Grote Street. The following year, the firm had also designed a house (demolished) for Joseph Oaks at 281 Parkside Avenue.

The developers anticipated that the new hotel would be ready in time to receive visitors to the Pan-American Exposition. This major international fair celebrating the arrival of the United States as a world power after the Spanish American War, was set to open in the spring of 1901. However, the architects' limited experience in hotel design and the short construction schedule made this deadline problematic. In April 1900, the investors abandoned the Buffalo firm and replaced them with Henry Ives Cobb, a Chicago architect with a national reputation. Cobb's design called for a nine-story building with an additional story at the corner and a two-story rotunda for a lobby. By the summer of 1900, under Cobb's direction, the church was demolished and two walls of the hotel's foundations were built. However, soon after, financing collapsed and all construction ceased. At the opening of the Pan-American Exposition in early 1901, there was only a large hole in the ground at the corner of Washington and Clinton Streets where the hotel should have stood.

The Initial Building, 1901-1904, by Bethune, Bethune & Fuchs

In the summer of 1901, two of the original promoters, Charles J. Spaulding and Joseph A. Oaks, revived the hotel project. Bethune, Bethune & Fuchs were once again engaged as architects and visited many of the finest hotels in the country before completing their plans. Financing was still a problem until the summer of 1902, when Walter B. Duffy of Rochester stepped in to fund the entire project as an investment. One of the most prominent distillers in the nation, Duffy was the millionaire producer of Duffy's Malt Whiskey. With funding secured, the plans were completed and filed on September 6, 1902. Work began at the end of that month.

The final design was for a fireproof seven-story, steel frame and concrete building that contemporaries described as in the French Renaissance in style of architecture. This style of architecture was introduced to France in the sixteenth century, as the developments in Italian High Renaissance architecture moved into Northern Europe. Due to the concerted efforts of King Francois I, who invited Leonardo da Vinci and other Italian artists to come and live in France to modernize the arts of his country, French architects were the first in Cisalpine Europe to adopt new Italian design ideas. Later, Henry IV was responsible for the further evolution of the French Renaissance style when, in the early seventeenth century, he promoted the creation in Paris of a number of residential squares surrounded by contiguous townhouses houses. The most important of these addresses is the Place des Vosges (1605). The many *hôtels particuliers* that lined the park-like square, were designed in a uniform style that was characterized by red brick walls with white stone dressings around doors and windows and the adoption of Classical decorative details for ornament. Place des Vosges was (and recently is again) an address of quality that helped to identify its style of architecture with comfortable urban living. Bethune's design for the Hotel Lafayette echoes the buildings of the place de Vosges, especially in the continuous ground floor arcade that forms the ground floor of the building. (In the French example, the ground

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floors of all the houses consist of continuous covered arcades where one might walk in inclement weather.) However, the voussoirs of the Hotel Lafayette arcades, as well as the acroteria and moldings of the Classical cornice and other decorative elements on the exterior of the Buffalo building are made of glazed terra cotta rather than of cut stone. The decision to imitate the style of Henry IV or the French Renaissance (which, in 1868, H. H. Richardson had adapted to his design of the William Dorsheimer house on Delaware Avenue in Buffalo [NR1975]) was most appropriate to the hotel's design, both because of its association with elegant Parisian domestic architecture and because its location on Lafayette Square also suggested the residential square—*places*--of Paris. The Marquis de Lafayette, despite his democratic views—would surely have been amused to have his name attached to such a grand Francophile fabrication.

When the hotel opened for business in 1904, the one-million-dollar structure was touted in the national press as "one of the most perfectly appointed and magnificent hotels in the country."³⁰ The principal entrance was at the northwest corner, facing Lafayette Square. From here, one entered the main lobby, which occupied the northwest corner of the first floor, extending 72 feet on Washington Street and 84 feet on Clinton Street. (This grand Neo-Classical lobby was replaced in 1942 by the present Art Moderne style lobby. Part of the original lobby was remodeled for commercial space.) The carriage entrance was at the middle of the Washington Street façade. All of the principal public rooms on the ground floor were richly decorated, and received natural light from enormous windows overlooking the street and from large skylights located in light courts. The principal exterior material was dark red vitreous brick, supplied by John H. Black of Buffalo; it was trimmed with a generous amount of semi-glazed ivory white terra cotta manufactured by the Excelsior Terra Cotta Co. of New York. The first and seventh floors were almost entirely sheathed in terra cotta, which was also used extensively at the corners through all floors. In addition, the marquises over the entrances facing Lafayette Square, the carriage porch on Washington Street, and the numerous window balconies were of decorative wrought iron made by August Feine of Buffalo.

First Addition, 1906-1912, by Bethune, Bethune & Fuchs

The popularity of the Hotel Lafayette led to its being expanded and remodeled several times in its heyday. When it opened, the building extended 122½ feet on Washington Street and 147 feet on Clinton Street. (The original east end of the building was just beyond the vertical band of terra cotta in the center of the present north elevation.) The new hotel, however, did not remain this size for long. In 1906, Bethune, Bethune & Fuchs began working on plans to expand the Hotel Lafayette eastward to Ellicott Street, virtually doubling the size of the original building. Land acquisition for the expansion was completed in 1908. The impetus came in part from the construction of the first Statler Hotel (1906-1908; demolished 1968) at 279 Washington Street, the first permanent hostelry of Buffalonian Ellsworth M. Statler, one of the great hotel innovators of the period. Most notably, the Statler was the first hotel in the United States to have a bathroom in every guest room. This subsequently became a feature of all hotels of any pretension. In response, all the rooms in the new addition to the Hotel Lafayette would also have their own bathrooms. Plans for the addition were filed with the city on July

30 "Buffalo Hotel Opened," *The New York Times*, June 2, 1904, 6. The hotel was leased for twenty-one years by the Hotel's Men's Association of New York and managed by Spalding and Oaks. The Transportation Club of Buffalo occupied the entire seventh floor for club rooms.

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1, 1909, and the steel frame of the addition was completed before the end of the year. Although largely complete by the summer of 1911, the reconstructed hotel did not have a formal reopening until the spring of 1912.

The exterior treatment of the original building was repeated on the addition in the same dark red brick with white terra cotta trim. (This exterior remains almost completely intact today.) A new entrance was installed on the Clinton Street facade, fronted by a fifty-foot wide wrought iron carriage porch. The original entrance on Washington Street became the "men's entrance." A new stand-alone brick building was constructed in 1910 south of the hotel, across Darrow Alley, for the heating and electrical plant; the permit for this building was signed out to "Louise Bethune," further evidence of her close involvement in this project. The powerhouse was connected to the hotel through a tunnel under Darrow Alley. This building was demolished in 1961. The ground floor spaces were significantly altered. The dining rooms were moved from the southwest side of the original building to the northeast side of the addition, connected to the lobby by a wide corridor; there was also an additional dining room in the basement at the northeast corner, lit by large leaded glass windows. There was also a large lounge or assembly room on the main floor overlooking Ellicott Street. These spaces remain largely intact today. The kitchen was relocated to the basement, below the main dining room. The billiard room and barber shop were moved up from the basement into the reworked ground floor spaces formerly occupied by the restaurants. (These spaces are no longer extant.) The original grill room was somewhat reworked, according to a contemporary description, to become...

...the Lafayette Room – the principal public parlor or conversation room of the hotel for the comfort and convenience of men and women guests. It is a room 40x50 feet, with three large plate-glass windows opening high enough above the street to prevent intrusion. The room is designed in late English domestic style of the Elizabethan period and executed in English oak of soft brownish tint, which is reproduced in the furnishings. The draperies are deep antique blue. The ceiling is massive elliptical groins. One broad doorway commands a wide view of the spacious lobby, elevators and main staircase, and a corresponding doorway opposite opens into the dainty Orchard Restaurant.³¹

An antique fireplace mantel was installed on the east wall of the room, emblazoned with the Lafayette coat-of-arms, while the arms of other Revolutionary War patriots replaced the paintings of Falstaff in the lunettes around the room. This space is partly extant.

The new and remodeled rooms were described by the representatives of the trade journal *Hotel Monthly* when they visited the hotel in 1911:

Since our last visit to Buffalo two of the leading hotels, the Statler and Lafayette, have been nearly doubled in size. We spent an hour going over the new part of the Lafayette, which hotel now takes up the entire block fronting on Lafayette square, and the ground floor is changed around almost completely. The lobby remains in its original corner, except enlarged. The main dining room is moved to the

³¹ *Hotel Monthly*

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Lafayette square front, which, other than the bar, is taken up altogether with dining rooms, and a wide corridor gives access to all. The main dining room is finished with mahogany walls over marble base. One very beautiful dining room is Tiffany decorated in light green, and is similar to the Grecian room in Chicago's Blackstone. There is a large lounge and assembly room, and a new public lavatory on the ground floor; also a music gallery, serving the dining rooms and lobby.

The kitchen, located in the basement, is all tile lined, and there is a large dining room in the basement located convenient to the kitchen.

The Lafayette has self-contained engine plant located away from the hotel.

There are 200 rooms in the annex, making a total of 460, we are told. The lay-out of the floors was designed by Mrs. Bethune, who provided for every room a large clothes closet. In the new part, all outside rooms are finished in mahogany, the inside rooms in oak. The rooms are papered. The dressers have glass top and lace scarf. The beds are brass, on glass sliding shoe. Rooms are connected with double doors. Each room has mirror faced door, Cadillac desk, trunk rest, portable lights, fireproof waste basket, and the 'phones are provided with scratch pads. Fifteen parlor suites are furnished in Colonial style with silk window draping. The water pitchers are Syracuse china.

The bath rooms have porcelain tubs built in, large lavatory, and medicine chest; brackets and medicine chest taking the place of shelves over the lavatory. The onliwon toilet fixture is used, and this is built into the wall. There is a douche bag hook. The bath rooms are tiled to a height of four feet, and have tile floor.

The sixth floor is devoted to sample rooms, all with abundance of light, and with drop lights from the ceiling all around.³²

Alterations and Additions, 1913-1937 by Esenwein & Johnson-

One of the most pressing needs of the hotel after the opening of the new addition in 1912 was the installation of individual bathrooms in all of the guest rooms in the original building. The management chose not to return the original architectural firm (which by the spring of 1915 consisted only of William Fuchs), but instead commissioned the local firm of Esenwein & Johnson, who had added a large semicircular marquee to the principal entrance in 1913. One of the largest architectural offices in Buffalo, Esenwein & Johnson served as architects to the United Hotels Company, the largest hotel chain on the continent, and thus had a national reputation in hotel design. Over an eight year period (1914-1922), Esenwein & Johnson oversaw the installation of bathrooms in every guest room that did not originally have one, and the replacement of the communal bathrooms on each floor with new guest rooms. This highly complicated task was exceeding difficult to accomplish without disturbing guests or hotel operations.

³² Ibid.

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In 1916, Esenwein & Johnson was commissioned to add a ballroom to the hotel. A two and three-story brick addition was constructed south of the recent addition, extending the hotel footprint to the north line of Darrow Alley. Completed in 1917, this addition was constructed of brick, with white terra cotta trim on the Ellicott Street facade that is more restrained in design than that used on the earlier building, but nonetheless in sympathy to the original building. The principal space was the large rectangular ballroom, with a classically detailed interior unobstructed by columns. The northwest end the ballroom was connected to the dining room corridor by a foyer, which was likely an earlier room modified for its new purpose. At the northeast end the ballroom opened into what was likely the large lounge or assembly room in the earlier addition. The present women's lounge, rest room and coat check room were also evidently installed at this time. All of these spaces are largely intact, but the large windows in the ballroom, three facing south and one facing east, have been considerably reduced in size. Small service rooms occupied the space above the ballroom.

Hotel accommodation in downtown Buffalo dramatically changed in 1923. In that year the new Hotel Statler opened on Niagara Square (the original Statler became the Hotel Buffalo). To ensure that his new building was to be the premier hostelry in the city, E. M. Statler bought the Iroquois Hotel, which was still greatly favored by the city's elite, and turned it into an office building. Also in 1923, the new Genesee office building replaced the old Genesee Hotel. In order to stay current, the management of the Hotel Lafayette embarked on a program of renovation and expansion.

To keep the Hotel Lafayette current with the latest trends, Esenwein & Johnson were commissioned in 1924 to make further alterations and additions. The most significant of these was an addition to the south, which was seven stories high facing Washington Street but only two stories to the east, so as not to cut off daylight to the numerous light courts. Construction began in 1924 and was completed in 1926. Like the ballroom addition, it was also constructed of red brick with white terra cotta of a much simpler design than the original building. The ground floor contained the new billiard room, while additional hotel rooms were located in the seven-story section; the second story of the rest of the addition contained hotel work rooms. In the early 1930s, the billiard room was converted into a bar, the first hotel bar in Buffalo to open after the repeal of prohibition; soon named the Lafayette Tap Room, it has remained open to the present day. Overall, the addition has had only minor changes since it was built.

The construction of the addition brought about simultaneous changes in the ground floor spaces. The spaces former billiard room (originally the restaurant) was gutted; at least a part of the south wall of the lobby was evidently moved south, encompassing part of the former billiard room. The new lobby spaces were decorated to match the existing scheme. The remainder of the former billiard room became a coffee shop, reputedly the first in a Buffalo hotel. Also, a new semicircular stage was constructed in the west end of the ballroom in the form of an exedra.

Esenwein & Johnson supervised the installation of new elevators in 1928-1929. The position of the elevators was shifted to the southeast, to be on axis with the Washington Street entrance; two new elevator shafts were installed for two new bronze Otis elevator cars, and the original elevator shafts were filled in. A section of extra-wide corridor on each guest room floor indicates the former position of the original elevators.

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The 1929 elevators remain in use today. Esenwein & Johnson were involved in numerous other alterations to the hotel over the years. For example, they supervised the redecoration of the grill room in 1920. The firm continued its involvement with the hotel until about 1937.

WWII-era Modernization Program (1942-1946)

Lobby Remodeling, 1942, by Roswell E. Pfohl and Design, Inc.-

One of the most dramatic changes to the hotel's interior occurred in 1942, when an Art Moderne lobby was installed. A transformation of the lobby was probably under consideration by the end of the 1920s, when the present elevators were installed, but was likely too expensive an undertaking during the Great Depression. The plans were revived in 1941 in the current Art Moderne style, and went forward despite the entry of the United States into World War II in December 1941. The following February, the plans were detailed in the local press:

Hotel Lafayette will cut off a corner of its lobby at Clinton and Washington Streets for use as a drug store and will shift its main entrance to Washington Street as part of a modernization program, President Walter A. Yates said today.

The Lafayette lobby will undergo a complete transformation. The registration and mail desks and cashier's cage will be shifted and the marble-like stairway to the second floor will be closed. A new stairway will be built near the Clinton Street entrance.

Plans also call for dropping the ceiling in the hotel lobby, eliminating the heavy beams. The scagliola, or marble-like columns, and wainscoting will be covered with plaster and painted as part of the streamlining. A new terazza flooring will be laid. The present Washington Street entrance will be increased in size to make it the main entrance to the hotel.

Design Inc. of St. Louis is the general contractor for the hotel-modernization program. Vice President Earl E. Davenport of Design Inc. is working on the detailed plans with Roswell E. Pfohl, Buffalo architect. The improvements are expected to be completed about June 1.³³

One of the most interesting features of the new space were two large intarsia murals—made of pieces of various colored inlaid wood--on the north and south walls. The south wall featured the Buffalo River, with lake freighters within a canyon of grain elevators, while the north wall featured a fighter aircraft flying above the Buffalo Airport. The remodeling also encompassed the area immediately east of the elevators, which received identical treatment floor, walls and recessed ceilings with indirect lighting; this space was used as a lounge. With only minor cosmetic changes, this magnificent space remains almost completely intact.

The former lobby space at the northwest corner of the building became a drugstore, a contemporary account praised the change for "brightening the corner of the Lafayette Hotel where once were a dozen or so

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overstuffed lounges and guests and a décor more fashionable during the early part of the century than in the forties.”¹⁴ The new corner drug store measured 43 feet on Washington Street and 55 feet on Clinton Street, and had about 3000 square feet of floor space. Lit by over a mile of neon tubing fixtures, it featured a stainless steel soda fountain and lunch counter. This up-to-date equipment was installed only days before the government restricted the use of such metal to the war effort. The drug store space has been considerably altered by subsequent tenants, although the original ceiling details remain visible above the present drop ceiling.

Dining Room Alterations, 1946 (designer unknown)-

In April 1946, an unknown designer filed plans for alterations to the main dining room. Unlike the lobby remodeling, however, many decorative elements of the earlier dining room survived in this remodeling. The beamed ceiling was lowered around the perimeter of the room in order to accommodate ventilation ducts, but the central portion of the ceiling remained untouched. Two freestanding columns received mirrors for most of their height, while high relief decorative detailing was added to the existing pilasters. The floor level was slightly raised on the south and west sides of the room and separated from the lower floor by curving balustrades. The newly renovated space was christened the “Crystal Room.” Though closed for years now and considerably run down; it looks today much as it did in the 1940s.

The Niagara Falls Peace Conference of 1914

In April 1914, President Woodrow Wilson sent U.S. Marines to occupy the port of Vera Cruz, Mexico. This unilateral action taken during the Mexican Revolution provoked an international crisis, which Mexico and the United States, with other Western Hemisphere countries, sought to resolve with a peace conference held at Niagara Falls, Ontario, later the same year. The site was chosen because Canada was a neutral nation to the dispute. The conference, which historian Michael Small has called “the forgotten peace,” was the first exclusively North American peace conference. Convened at the Clifton House overlooking the cataract, its overall purpose was to bring a peaceful resolution to the Mexican Revolution, which had been raging for several years and which had been precipitated by the seizing of a group of U. S. Navy sailors in Vera Cruz. Their rescue had resulted in the American occupation of that city.

The conference soon became deadlocked over the exclusion of the Mexican Constitutionalist representatives of General Carranza, the leader of the forces fighting the sitting Huerta government. To break the deadlock, states Buffalo historian Frank Severance, “on the afternoon of June 16th a conference was held at the Hotel Lafayette in Buffalo between the United States delegates to the Peace Conference and representatives of Carranza.”⁹ The meeting took place in “private rooms” and lasted several hours. “In an earnest desire to save the Mexican peace undertaking from failure,” reported the *New York Times* on its front page, “...the American delegates to the conference went to Buffalo today to confer with Rafael Zurbaran Capmany and Luis Cabrera, two of the three men appointed by General Carranza as his delegates. . . . The conference . . . took place in the Lafayette Hotel in Buffalo, where the Carranza delegates arrived this morning from Washington. Every effort was made to keep secret their presence in Buffalo.”³⁴ However, despite these backdoor negotiations, the

³⁴“Americans Fail to Win Carranza Agents at Conference in Buffalo,” *New York Times*, June 17, 1914, 1.

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various participants could not agree on terms, and the Niagara Falls Peace Conference adjourned at the end of June without a peace deal.

The Other Architects

Esenwein & Johnson- The firm of Esenwein & Johnson was among the most significant ever to practice in Buffalo. A native of Wurtemberg, August C. Esenwein (1856-1926) was trained in architecture and engineering at what is now the University of Stuttgart, and emigrated to the United States in 1880. He opened his own office in Buffalo after winning the competition for the city's first Music Hall in 1882 (destroyed in 1885). His was a successful though small practice until 1897, when he formed a partnership with James A. Johnson (1865-1939). A native of the Syracuse area, Johnson had trained in several prominent offices, including Marling & Burdett in Buffalo and McKim, Mead & White and Richard Morris Hunt in New York, before entering the short-lived Buffalo partnerships of Marling & Johnson and Boughton & Johnson. Esenwein & Johnson soon achieved great success with buildings for Buffalo's Pan-American Exposition of 1901, most notably the Temple of Music, where President McKinley was assassinated. The firm designed some of the most prominent buildings in Buffalo, including the General Electric Building (1912, NR listed), the Lafayette (1903) and Masten Park (1913) High Schools, the Ward Pumping Station (1916), the Buffalo Museum of Science (1926), and three buildings in the J. N. Adam / A. M. & A.'s Historic District, adjacent to the Lafayette Hotel and recently added to the National Register. Esenwein & Johnson was one of the foremost hotel design firms in the United States, and were the architects for the United Hotels Company, the largest hotel chain in the country at the time. Surviving examples of their hotel work in New York State include the Samuels (1910) in Jamestown, the Utica (1910, 1925) in Utica, and the Niagara (1923) in Niagara Falls. The final major work of Esenwein & Johnson was the United Office Building (1929), headquarters for the United Hotels Company, at Niagara Falls. In the 1920s Esenwein & Johnson had become principally specialists in hotel design, but during the Great Depression, there was little call for this type of work, and the firm struggled to survive. It was dissolved in 1942, having done little work during the preceding decade.

Roswell E. Pfohl- Roswell E. Pfohl (1895-1972) was a notable architect in Buffalo for over four decades. After attending Canisius High School and Canisius College in his native city, Pfohl went on to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) where he graduated in 1922 with a degree in architectural engineering. He opened his own office in Buffalo in 1925. Schools were the firm's early specialty. Pfohl and his associates are reported to have "designed or renovated about 80 schools in Western New York."¹¹ The central school (1938-1939) in Alexander, N.Y., is one early example. Pfohl was also supervising architect for the Art Moderne style Greyhound Bus Terminal (1941, altered) at 666-672 Main Street where he demonstrated his excellent knowledge of the style that he used so effectively in the new lobby of the Lafayette Hotel the following year. (Unfortunately, nothing is currently known about his collaborators and the contractors on the Hotel Lafayette project, Design Inc. of St. Louis.) As Pfohl, Roberts & Biggie, the firm rose to local prominence in the 1960s, designing the Palace Burlesque Theater (1967) at 710 Main St., later Studio Arena Theater, the Dulski Federal Office Building (1968-1973) at 111 West Huron St. (extensively altered in 2009) and the City Court Building (1972-1974) at 50 Delaware Ave.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 9 Page 1

Hotel Lafayette
Name of Property
Erie County, New York
County and State

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 9 Page 2

Hotel Lafayette
Name of Property
Erie County, New York
County and State

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Hotel Lafayette
Name of Property

Erie County, New York
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 0.86

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 18 183717 4755314
Zone Easting Northing

3 18
Zone Easting Northing

2 18

4 18

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Martin Wachadlo & Frank Kowsky (consultants) Daniel McEneny- (NYSHPO)

organization date June 12th, 2010

street & number PO Box 189 telephone 518.237.8643

city or town Waterford state NY zip code 12188

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner (Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO)

name Signature Development

street & number 489 Ellicott Street telephone

city or town Buffalo state NY zip code 14202

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*)

Estimated Burden Statement: public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, D.C.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 10 Page 1

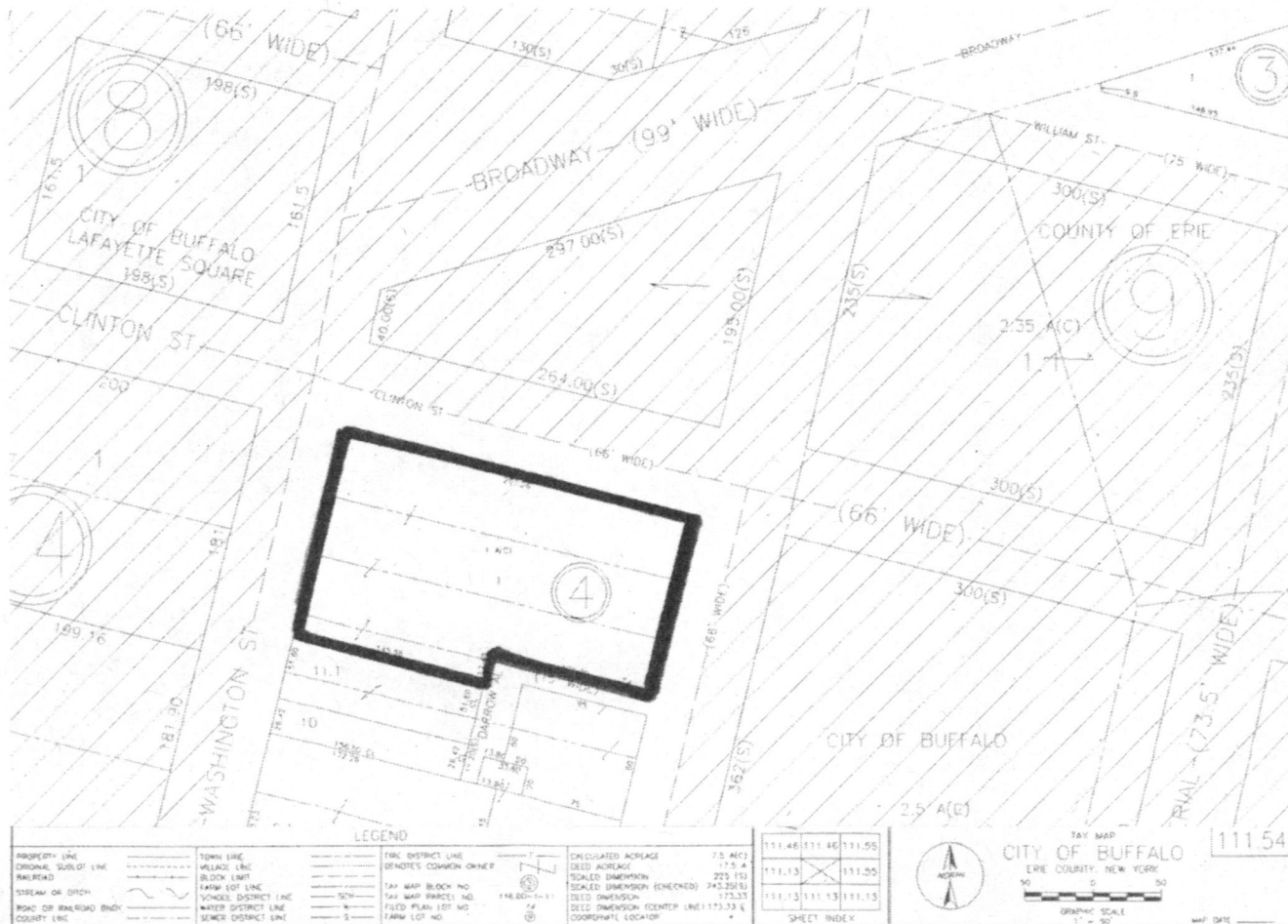
Hotel Lafayette
Name of Property
Erie County, New York
County and State

Verbal Boundary Description

The Hotel Lafayette is located on a roughly rectangular parcel of land in the City of Buffalo's central business district. Sited adjacent to Lafayette Square, the building's two principal facades face north on Clinton Street and east on Washington Street. The Clinton Street elevation consumes the entire north end of the block. The non-principal elevations face Ellicott Street to the west and Darrow Alley to the south.

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes those lands historically associated with the Hotel since its final building addition in 1924.



Graphic Scale: 1 inch = 50 feet

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 10 Page 2

Hotel Lafayette
Name of Property
Erie County, New York
County and State

Hotel Lafayette, 391 Washington Street Buffalo, NY



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 11 Page 1

Hotel Lafayette
Name of Property
Erie County, New York
County and State

Additional Information

Photos- Martin Wachadlo, 2010, On File Peebles Island Resource Center, Waterford, NY

- 1 - Main facade from northwest
- 2 - Lower facade detail
- 3 - Upper facade detail
- 4 - Rear view from southeast
- 5 - Lobby from northeast
- 6 - North lobby intarsia
- 7- Obscured details
- 8 - Corridor
- 9- Hall Detail
- 10 - Dining Room
- 11 - Ballroom
- 12 - Lafayette Tap Room
- 13 - East stairway at 6th floor
- 14 - Room 225

Maps, Drawings, & Plans

- 1- First Floor Plan- 2010
- 2- Sanborn 1893-1899
- 3- Sanborn 1916-1940
- 4- Building Survey- post 1926- Norman M. Herthe, Engineer and Surveyor, Re-survey- Herthe and Sonnenberger September 1962
- 5- c.1902 Drawing- Bethune, Bethune & Fuchs, 215 Franklin Street, Buffalo, NY (Damaged)

Historic Views

Courtesy of the Buffalo Erie County Historical Society

- 1- Hotel Lafayette pre-1911- Original Building Footprint
- 2- Hotel Lafayette post-1909-1912 Bethune Addition
- 3- Lafayette Square- c.1920s
- 4- Hotel Lafayette 1941
- 5- Corridor c.1911
- 6- Lafayette Room c.1922
- 7- Restaurant- c.1920s
- 8- Lobby c.1940s

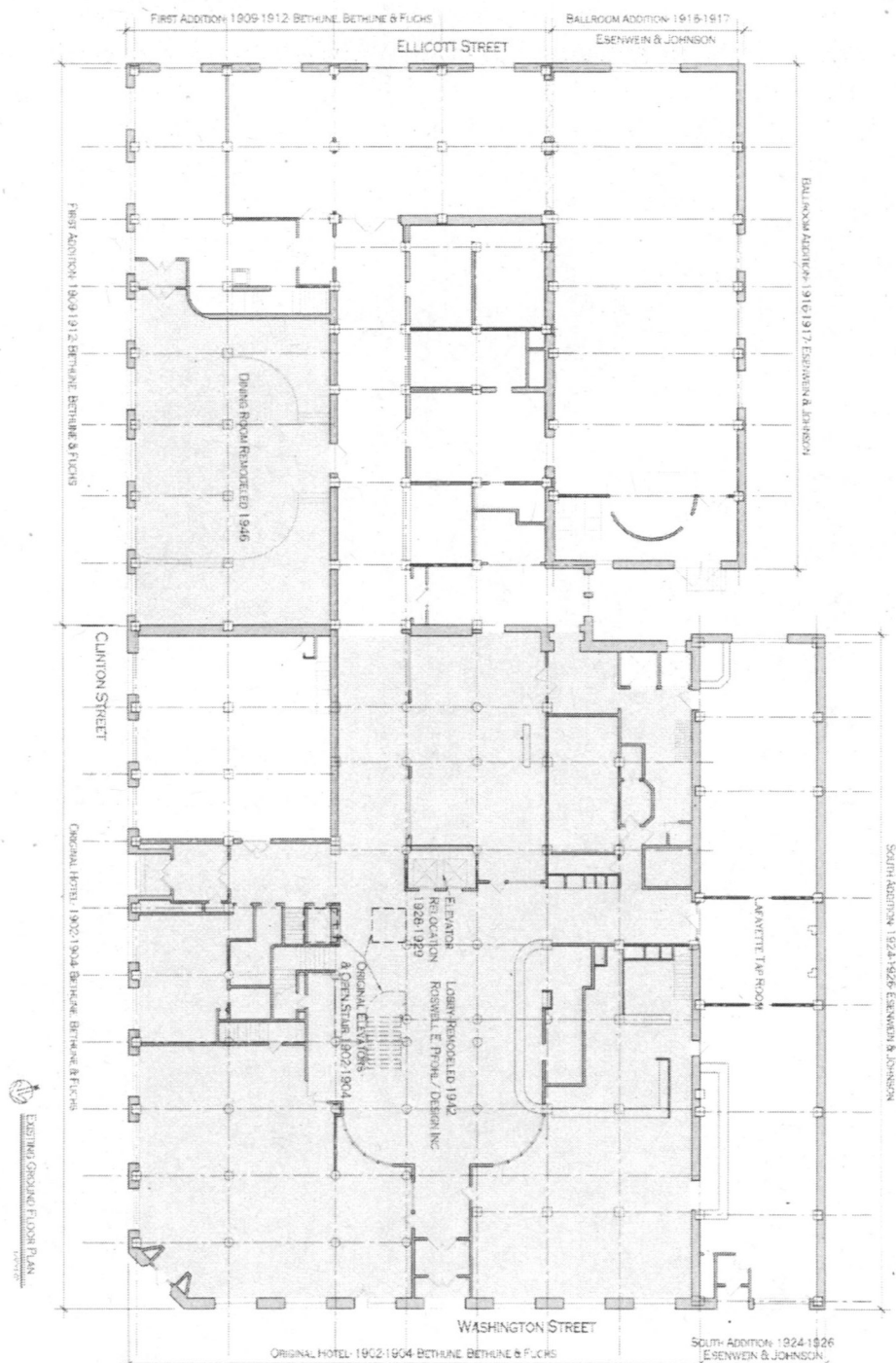
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 11 Page 2

Hotel Lafayette
Name of Property
Erie County, New York
County and State

1.) First Floor Plan- 2010



EXISTING GROUND FLOOR PLAN
1970

PROJECT NAME:
REHABILITATION & ALTERATIONS TO
Lafayette Hotel
391 Washington St.
Buffalo, NY 14203

REVISIONS
DATE
BY



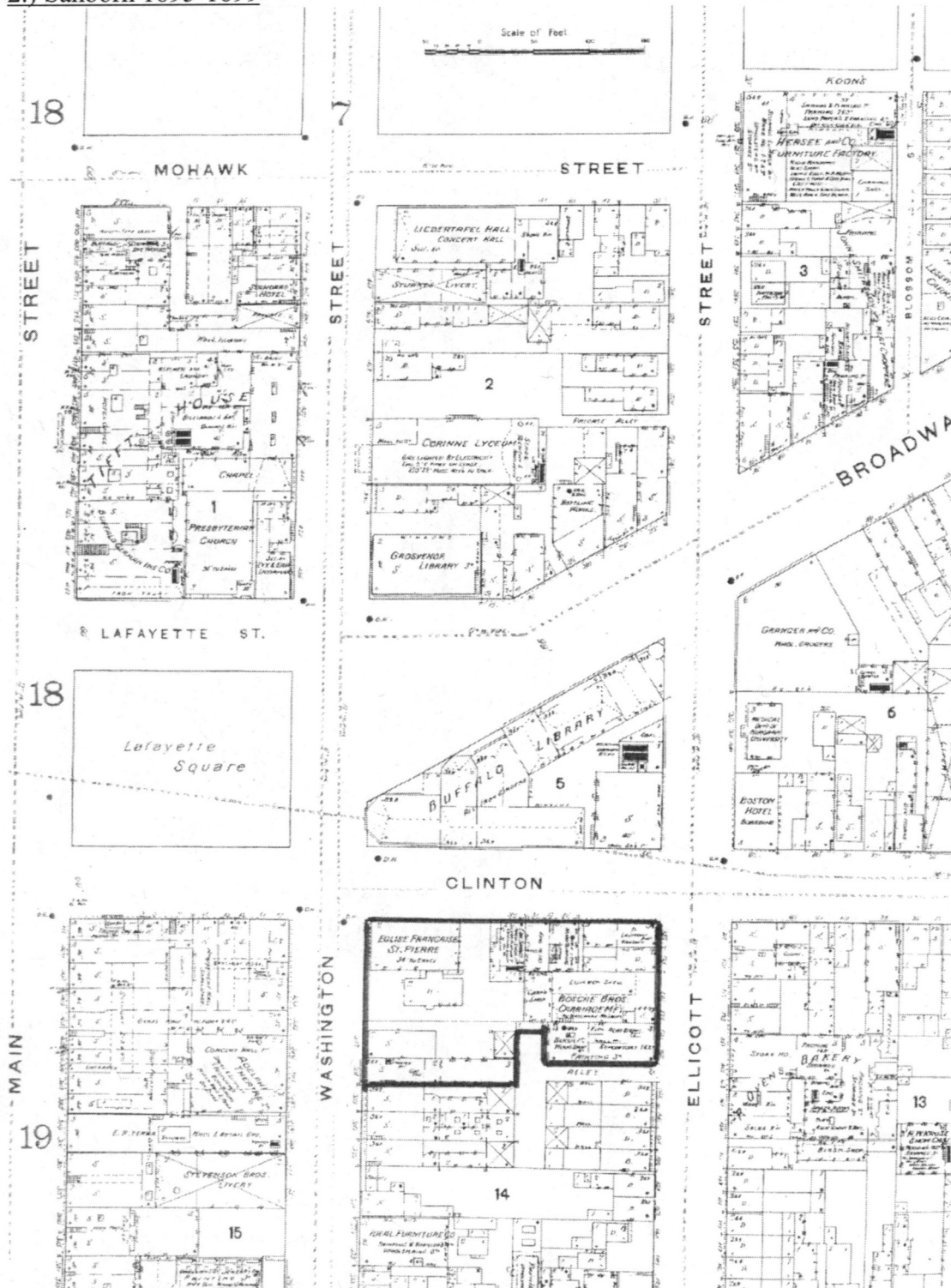
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 11 Page 3

Hotel Lafayette
Name of Property
Erie County, New York
County and State

2.) Sanborn 1893-1899



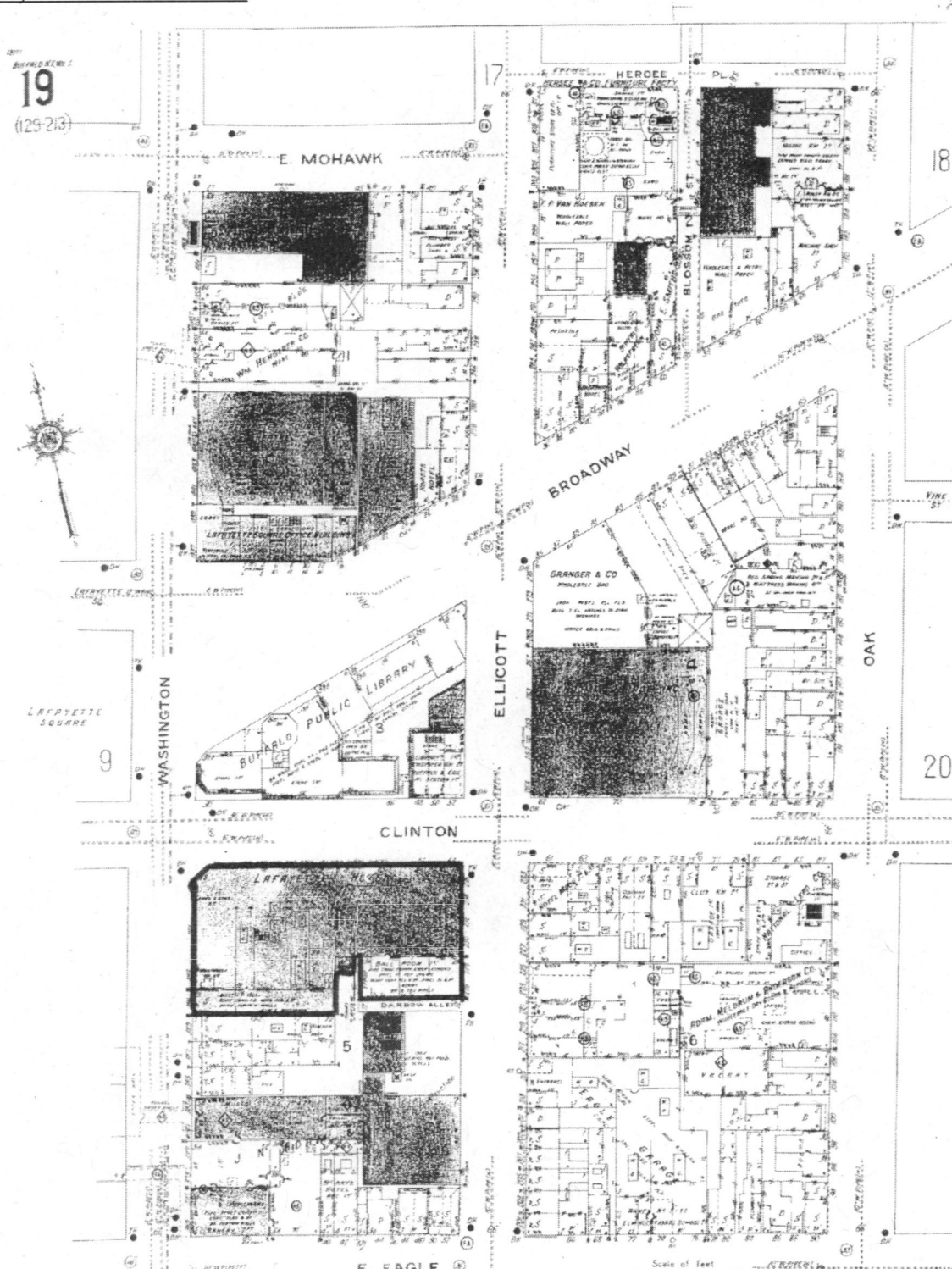
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 11 Page 4

Hotel Lafayette
Name of Property
Erie County, New York
County and State

3.) Sanborn 1916-1940



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 11 Page 5

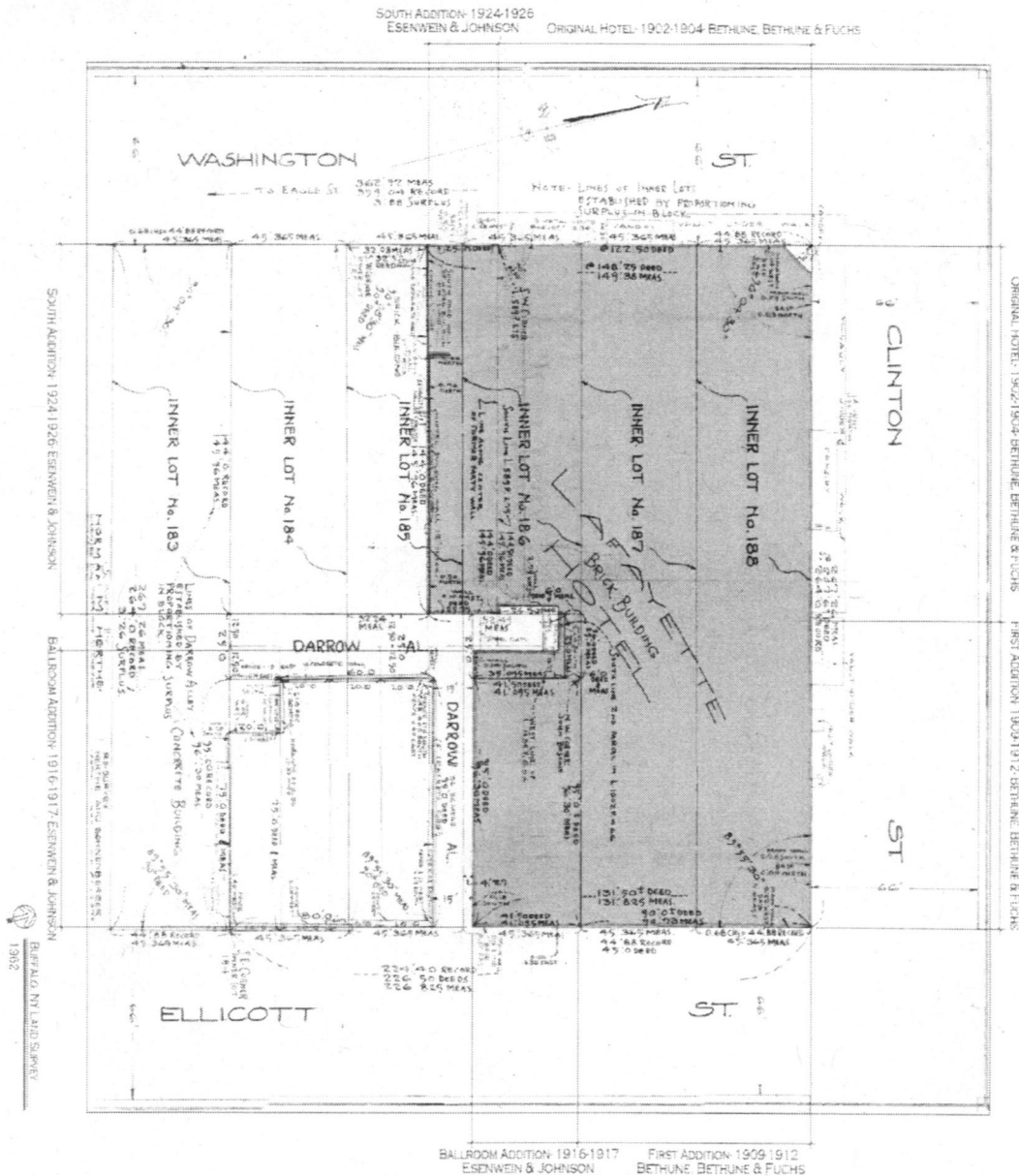
Hotel Lafayette

Name of Property

Erie County, New York

County and State

4.) Building Survey- post 1926- Norman M. Herthe, Engineer and Surveyor, Re-survey- Herthe and Sonnenberger September 1962



RECORDS
C-100
1962

PROJECT: HOTEL
Rehabilitation & Alterations to
Lafayette Hotel
351 Washington St.
Buffalo, NY 14203

REVISIONS



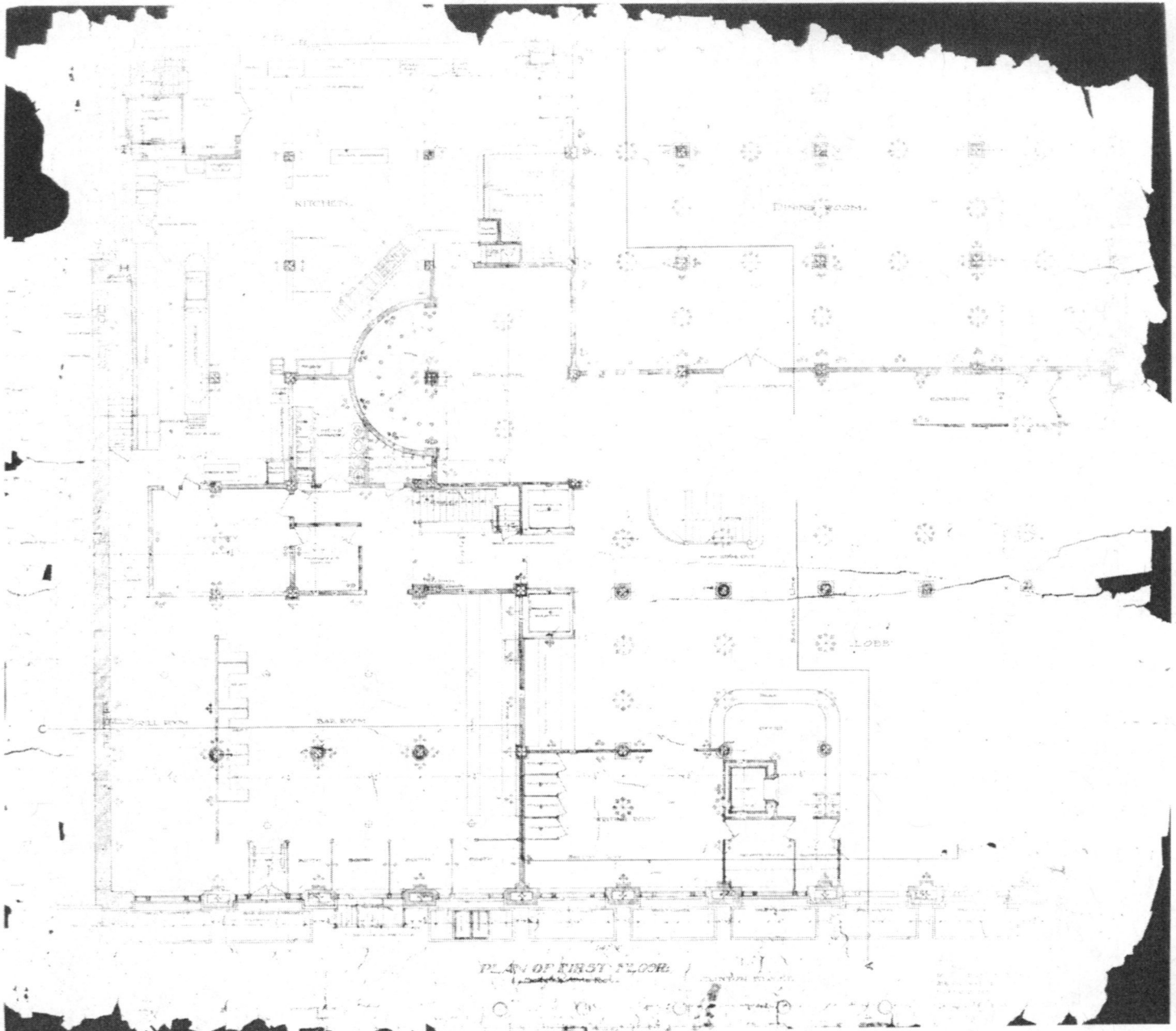
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 11 Page 6

Hotel Lafayette
Name of Property
Erie County, New York
County and State

5.) c.1902 Drawing- Bethune, Bethune & Fuchs, 215 Franklin Street, Buffalo, NY (Damaged)



(Clinton Street)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 11 Page 7

Hotel Lafayette
Name of Property
Erie County, New York
County and State

1.) Hotel Lafayette pre-1911- Original Building Footprint



2.) Hotel Lafayette post-1909-1912 Bethune Addition



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 11 Page 8

Hotel Lafayette
Name of Property
Erie County, New York
County and State

3.) Lafayette Square- c.1920s

LAFAYETTE SQUARE, BUFFALO, N. Y.



4.) Hotel Lafayette 1941



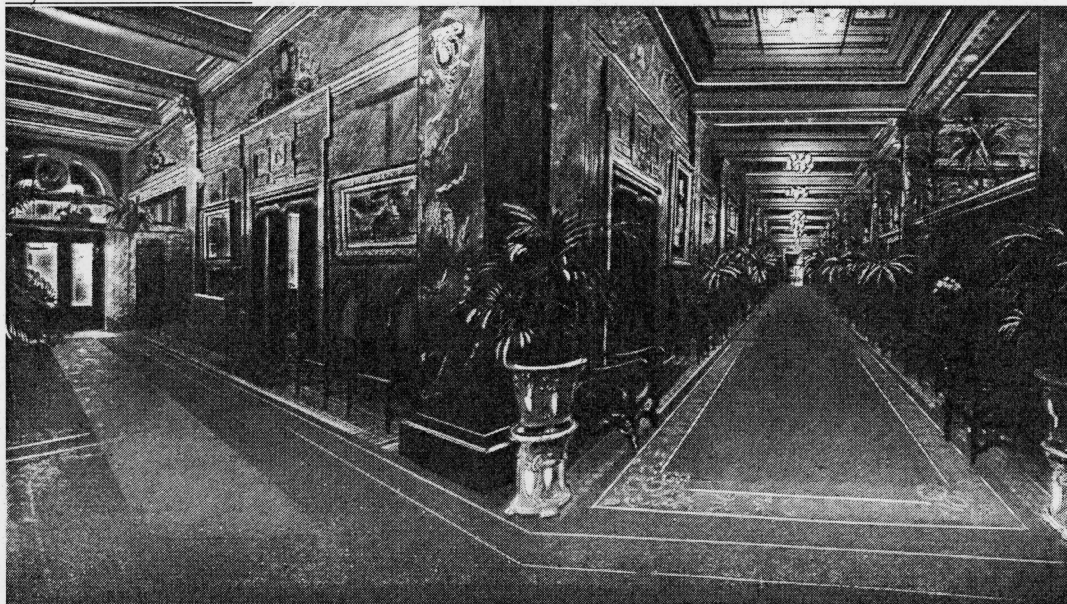
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 11 Page 9

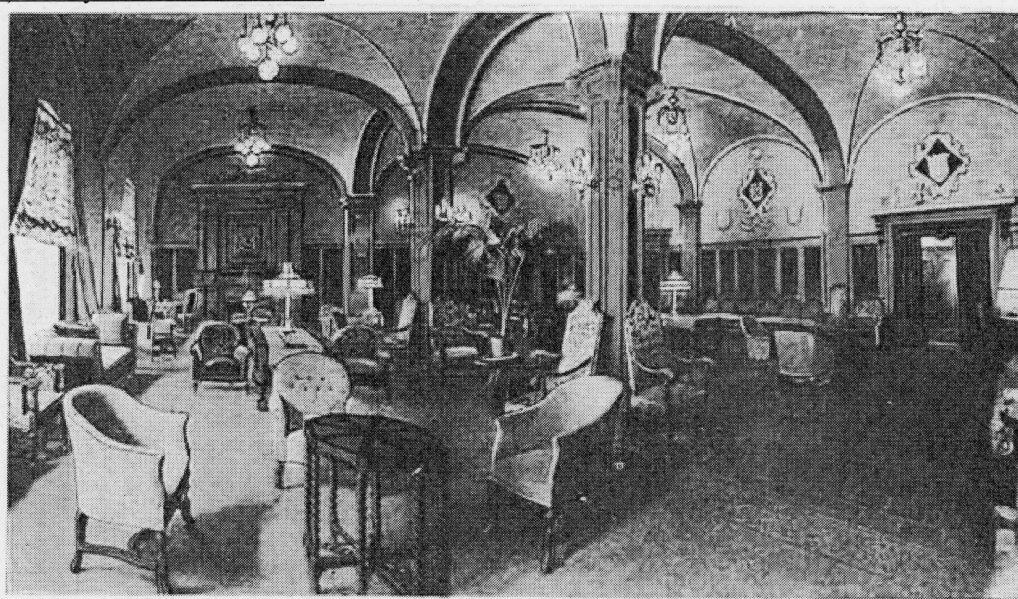
Hotel Lafayette
Name of Property
Erie County, New York
County and State

5.) Corridor c.1911



Main Corridor, Hotel Lafayette, Buffalo, N. Y.

6.) Lafayette Room c.1922



Lafayette Room, Hotel Lafayette, Buffalo, N. Y.

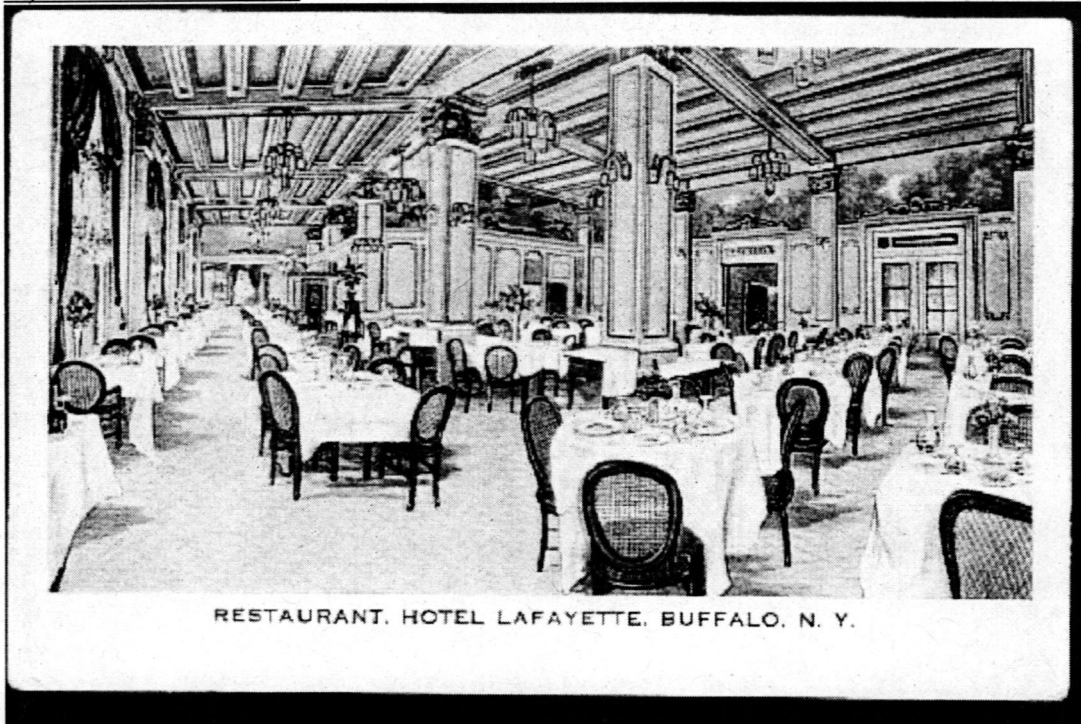
United States Department of the Interior
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National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 11 Page 10

Hotel Lafayette
Name of Property
Erie County, New York
County and State

7.) Restaurant- c.1920s



8.) Lobby c.1940s



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet_____
Name of Property_____
County and State

Section number _____ Page _____

Name of multiple property listing (if applicable)**SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD**

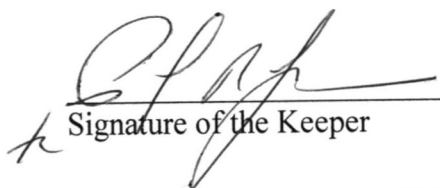
NRIS Reference Number: 10000555

Date Listed: 08/19/2010

Property Name: Hotel Lafayette County: Erie State: NY

Multiple Name:

This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.


Signature of the Keeper

____ 08/19/2010 ____

Date of Action

=====

Amended Items in Nomination: In Section 8 of the Hotel Lafayette nomination the Applicable Criterion B and significant person Louis Bethune has been added for Ms. Bethune's work as a female architect and her advancement of women in the field of architecture. This information has been confirmed with the New York State Historic Preservation Office.

DISTRIBUTION:**National Register property file****Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)**

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY Hotel Lafayette
NAME:

MULTIPLE
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: NEW YORK, Erie

DATE RECEIVED: 7/06/10 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 7/28/10
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 8/12/10 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 8/20/10
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 10000555

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: Y

COMMENT WAIVER: N

☒ ACCEPT ☐ RETURN ☐ REJECT 8/19/10 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

*Nationally significant for Louise Behrman as
the first female member of the AIA and
other architectural firsts for a woman*

RECOM./CRITERIA B.C.

REVIEWER Aberkady

DISCIPLINE _____

TELEPHONE _____

DATE _____

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the
nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.



NY - Seie Co.

Hotel Lafayette

Photo 1



NY - Erie Co.
Hotel Lafayette
Photo 2



NY - Erie Co
Hotel Lafayette
Photo 3



NY - Erie Co
Hotel Lafayette
Photo 4.



NY - Erie Co

Hotel Lafayette

Photo 5



NY - Erie Co
Hotel Lafayette
Photo 6



NY - Erie Co

Hotel Lafayette 7

Photo 7



NY - Erie Co.

Hotel Lafayette

Photo 8



NY - Erie Co
Hotel Lafayette
Photo 9



NY - Erie Co.

Hotel Lafayette

Photo 10



NY - Erie Co.
Hotel Lafayette
Photo 11



NY - Erie Co
Hotel Lafayette
Photo 12.



NY - Erie Co
Hotel Lafayette
Photo 13



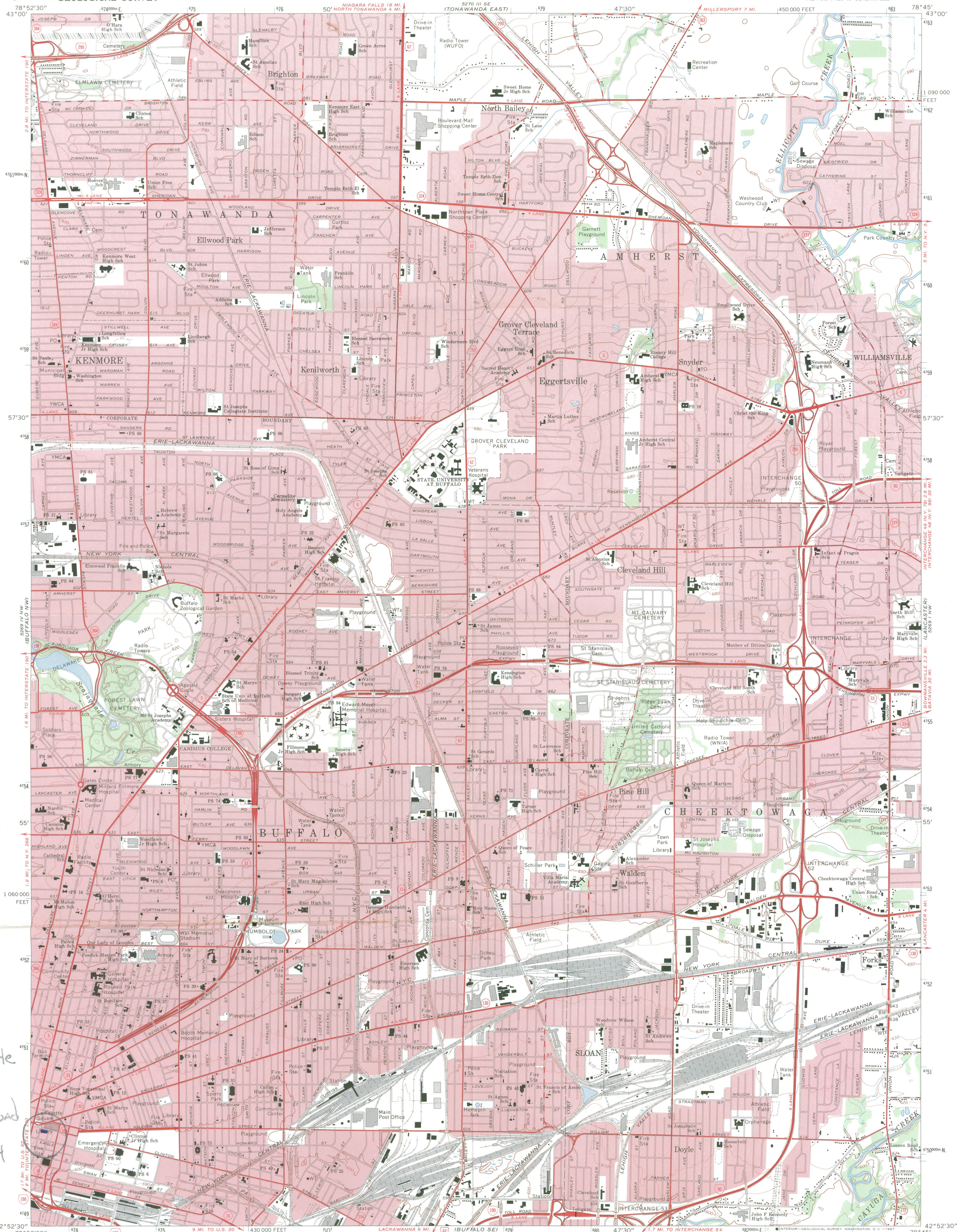
NY - Erie Co.

Hotel Lafayette

Photo 14

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

BUFFALO NE QUADRANGLE
NEW YORK-ERIE CO.
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)
NE/4 BUFFALO 15' QUADRANGLE

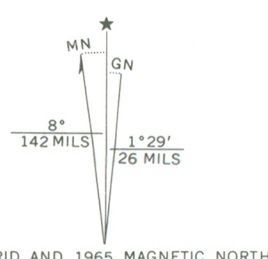


Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
in cooperation with New York Department of Public Works

Control by USGS, USC&GS, USCE, and U.S. Lake Survey
Planimetry compiled by U.S. Corps of Engineers from
aerial photographs taken 1942. Topography by
planetable surveys 1948. Revised 1965

Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
10,000-foot grid based on New York coordinate system, west zone
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,
zone 17, shown in blue

Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown



CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 FEET
DATUM IS MEAN SEA LEVEL

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, WASHINGTON, D. C. 20242
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

ROAD CLASSIFICATION
Heavy-duty ——— Light-duty ———
Medium-duty ——— Unimproved dirt ———
Interstate Route ——— U.S. Route ——— State Route ———



BUFFALO NE, N. Y.
NE/4 BUFFALO 15' QUADRANGLE
N4252.5—W7845.7.5

1965

AMS 5269 IV NE—SERIES V821



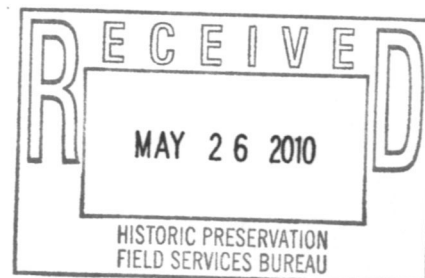
City of Buffalo

OFFICE OF STRATEGIC PLANNING
Byron W. Brown, *Mayor*

Brendan R. Mehaffy, *Executive Director*

May 20, 2010

Daniel McEneny
New York State Historic Preservation Office
Peebles Island Resource Center
P.O. Box 189
Waterford, NY 12188-0189



Re: Hotel Lafayette National Register Nomination

Dear Mr. McEneny:

Thank you for sending the draft National Register nomination for the Hotel Lafayette, located at 391 Washington St., to the Buffalo Preservation Board, a New York State Certified Local Government, for review and comment. The Board reviewed the nomination at its May 13, 2010 meeting and enthusiastically acted to support the nomination.

Based on its national significance as one of the last remaining major works of the first American female professional architect, Louise Bethune, the board agreed that Hotel Lafayette fully meets the criteria for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. The Board appreciated the written discussion on the role of Bethune and the rise of women in architecture and how she fit into the framework of the overall professionalization of the field of architecture. The document seems to be well prepared and was a fascinating read.

Please feel free to contact me if you should have any questions at (716) 851-5029 or mbrozek@city-buffalo.com.

Sincerely,

Michele Brozek Knoll
Senior Planner- Historic Preservation



THE ASSEMBLY
STATE OF NEW YORK
ALBANY

SAM HOYT
Assemblymember 144th District
Room 837
Legislative Office Building
Albany, New York 12248
518-455-4888
FAX: 518-455-4890
136 Delaware Avenue, Suite 005
Buffalo, New York 14209
716-885-9630
FAX: 716-885-9636
e-mail: hoyts@assembly.state.ny.us

CHAIR
Committee on Local Governments
CO-CHAIR
Task Force on High Speed Rail
COMMITTEES
Ways and Means
Transportation
Energy
Tourism, Arts & Sports Development
Cities
MEMBER
Puerto Rican/Hispanic Task Force

June 23, 2010

Ruth L. Pierpont
New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation
Historic Preservation Field Services Bureau
Peebles Island, P.O. Box 189
Waterford, NY 12188

Dear Ms. Pierpont:

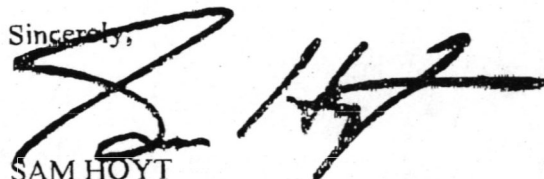
I am pleased to provide this letter of support on behalf the Hotel Lafayette's nomination to the National and State Registers of Historic Places.

The National Registers of Historic Places recognizes historically, architecturally and culturally significant properties as worthy of preservation. The Hotel Lafayette, built to accommodate the crowds of the Pan American Exposition, was designed by Louise Blanchard Bethune, the first professional female architect in the country. At one point the hotel was considered to be among the top 15 hotels nation-wide. Restoration of this once majestic landmark is a vital piece of revitalizing Buffalo's downtown.

With the recent passage of key amendments to the Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit law, restoration the Hotel Lafayette is another step towards becoming a reality. Developers, who have a \$35 million vision for the 106-year-old building that would allow all of the structure's original architectural details to remain intact, will now have an easier time selling state historic tax credits. Listing the Hotel Lafayette in the Registers of Historic Places will provide this vision with the support it needs to become a reality.

It is without hesitation that I offer my support for nomination of the Hotel Lafayette to the National and State Registers of Historic Places. Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can be of any further assistance regarding this matter.

Sincerely,


SAM HOYT
MEMBER OF THE ASSEMBLY

SH : rt



Printed on recycled paper.



New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation

Historic Preservation Field Services Bureau • Peebles Island, PO Box 189, Waterford, New York 12188-0189

518-237-8643

www.nysparks.com



David A. Paterson
Governor

Carol Ash
Commissioner

July 01, 2010

Ms. Alexis Abernathy
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places
1201 Eye St. NW
8th Floor
Washington, D.C. 20005

Re: Transmittal of National Register
Nominations

Dear Ms. Abernathy:

I am pleased to transmit four new National Register nominations to be considered for listing by the Keeper of the National Register as follows:

Amelia Galli-Curci Estate, Fleischmanns, Delaware and Ulster counties, NY
(two owners; one statement of support and one objection)

Hotel Lafayette, Buffalo, Erie Co., NY

Mohican II, Lake George, Warren Co., NY

133 East 80th St., New York, New York Co., NY

Thank you for your assistance in processing these proposals. Please feel free to call on me at 518-237-8643 ext. 3258 if any questions arise.

Sincerely,

Mark L. Peckham
National Register
Program Coordinator

enclosures